

In the Garden of the Gods, by Wm. M. Rain

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DRAWN BY F. DE FOREST SCHOCK

"My contribution to the conversation came from just above them."

"In the Garden of the Gods;" see page 57

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THE RED BOOK

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In the Garden of the Gods

BY WILLIAM McLEOD RAINÉ

When one is in the Garden of the Gods one should be, I suppose, in Elysian humor. My mood, to the contrary, for private reasons of my own, was thunderous. I lay on my elbow among the kinnikinnic where I had flung myself down in the shade of a silver spruce. But the sun was higher now, and its rare, untempered beat was on me. Naturally I used the shifting orb as a text on the futility of life. What was the use of arranging things comfortably when they always disarranged themselves as promptly as possible? Now, there was Katherine—

The sound of a revolver cracked into my sombre discontent. Hard on its echoes came the slap of running feet, and, as I guessed, the swish of petticoats. A raucous command to stop brought me to my feet instantly. It also brought the runner to a halt just out of my sight beyond the shoulder of the hill.

"I dare you to touch me," panted a high-pitched voice that struck in me a bell of recognition.

"I'm not going to hurt you," replied he of the hoarse bellow, soothingly. "You know that mighty well."

"If you put a finger on me I'll cry for help."

"There wouldn't anybody hear, Miss," replied the heavy bass.

"You—you coward!" Her voice was like a whip.

"Oh, you can call me anything you like but you got to go along with me, Miss," he said sullenly.

"I'll not go a step."

"I reckon you got to go, lady."

"May I go, too?" My contribution to

the conversation came from the knoll just above them.

They whirled as at the press of a button. The man was a huge hulking fellow in corduroys, but he did not look the villain by a long shot. Indeed, his guileless face, lit with amazement at my words, begged to offer a guarantee of honesty. Here certainly was no finished desperado. The first glimpse of him relieved my mind. We were in no personal danger at least.

"Who in time are you?" he wanted to know.

"Tavis Q. Damron, at your service. And you—since introductions are going?"

The young woman—she was a Miss Katherine Gray, stopping at the same hotel as I at Manitou—promptly took the opportunity to slip behind my back. For me, I was in a glow of triumph. It had not been twenty-four hours since Miss Gray had informed me that she meant never to speak again to me. And already the favoring gods had brought her to me on the run. In my relation I felt myself a match for a score of lowering countrymen.

"He shot at me," she cried over my shoulder.

"It went off accidentally," protested the man.

"I don't care. He shot."

"He'll not do it again," I promised, complacently.

My unlucky triumph must have crept into my voice. I felt her appraise with deliberate eye my sixty-six scant inches. Nothing "hips" me more than an inference that I am short. To be sure, I am

not a giant physically. Neither was Napoleon.

"I'm sorry not to meet with your probation," I said huffily.

"Oh, I did not say that. It would be unjust. You can't help being little," she was pleased to say, and I swear I heard the chuckle in her voice.

"Any more than you can help being offensive when you are in the humor."

"Don't take it so to heart. You may grow yet. You are very young, you know."

"Perhaps I am *de trop*. Very likely you were looking for somebody else when you came galloping down the hill," I said sulkily.

"I was looking for a man." Her casual eye swept the valley. Tavis Q. Damron really did not appear to be on the map.

"I am certain you will not have to look long," I assured her with excessive politeness.

"Thank you." She glanced scornfully at me. "I suppose you mean that for a compliment? I think it impertinent, if you want to know."

It was odd how we had almost forgotten the presence of our friend in corduroys; yet not so strange either, for he looked the picture of awkward indecision, much more the detected schoolboy than the "bad man" bandit. His fat, red hand, wandering restlessly about, included us in its orbit.

"I say, my man! Put up that gun! You make me nervous," I barked.

"It might go off again accidentally," suggested Miss Gray derisively. "We can't risk Mr. Damron's fainting. I suppose you have no restoratives with you, Mr. Corduroy?"

There came a shout from the cliff five hundred feet above. A man standing on the edge was beckoning to us.

"Somebody appears to want us to come and to share his beautiful view," I said.

Corduroy's indecision came to an end. "I guess we better be going back, Miss."

"I thought I understood her to say she did not care to go back," I said, eyeing him steadily.

Corduroy shifted uneasily. "She

hadn't any call to run away. Her father's up there."

"He's a prisoner," explained Miss Gray.

I gasped. "A prisoner?"

"Yes. Mr. Halloway is keeping him on that cliff and won't let him leave," she said, quite calmly.

"Halloway! Bob Halloway?"

She nodded defiantly. "Yes, Bob Halloway."

"But—why the thing is impossible."

"Isn't it ridiculous?" She gave a sudden charming smile. "I didn't know the West was so delightfully primitive,"

"Surely one can't hold up a copper king in that primeval fashion. It has to be done on Wall street." Reflecting on Simon Gray's probable reflections, I smiled. Immediately I regretted my indiscretion. The study of Miss Gray's moods was a continual education. They were teaching me just now that she might laugh at that which I might not.

"Isn't it humorous?" said Miss Gray, a little too sweetly. "Don't let me curb your gayety. He's only my father."

Instantly I switched the indecorous mirth from my face. "I don't see how he dares," I murmured, to bridge the pause.

"Dares! I thought you knew Bob Halloway better," she said scornfully. "He dares anything."

I did know him better. He would stick at nothing. Whatever else his smiling insolence covered, it did not hide any lack of courage to back his recklessness. He was the type of man that women find fascinating, especially women of the high-spirited, chivalrous order. You know the sort of scamp I mean—the kind whose dark, unscrupulous eyes and devil-may-care fearlessness draw the poor moths to the singeing flame. And though for his unworthiness his father two years before had shipped him to a ranch in Colorado and cut him adrift, my resurrected suspicions painted him a rival still to be feared. Katherine had liked him then; she liked him now. I knew it from the moment when the picturesque vagabond galloped up to our hotel two days before and offered her his strong brown hand and candid smile.



DRAWN BY F. DE FORREST SCHOOK

"And if I neglected my duties, you could always send a man out to shoot me."

See page 575

I meditated. "Of course it is a hold-up of some sort. He isn't doing it for fun. What does he want?"

Looking up, I happened to catch Katherine Gray's eyes. They were blushing. "Oh!" I exclaimed understandingly.

"Nothing of the kind! Don't be silly, Tavis," she told me sharply.

"Then I'm hanged if I *can* understand. I seem to be playing blind euchre with my eyes shut. First one finds Miss Katherine Gray, daughter and sole heir to Simon Gray, the Copper King, scudding over the mountains with Mr. Corduroy's revolver barking at her."

"I told you it was accidental," growled

the bass voice. "I couldn't catch her, so I took out my gun to frighten her into stopping."

"Then one hears that the Copper King himself is viewing scenery he does not enjoy, under enforced restraint at the hands of a young man who used to lead cotillions with his daughter before he fell into evil ways. You know I told you he was a scamp."

"Don't be a parrot, Mr. Damron," Katherine snapped. "I told *you* yesterday that I wasn't interested in your opinion of Mr. Halloway. You so often forget that you are not my chaperon."



DRAWN BY F. DE FOREST SCHOOK

"Word of honor," she called gaily back to him " See page 578

"Of course I don't want to rub it in, but if you had listened to—"

"—Grandmother Damron. Well, I didn't—and I'm not going to." Miss Gray's chin was in the air. She wheeled and began to climb the hillside.

"Where are you going?" I asked.

She can be very deaf on occasion.

"Oh, up the hill," she flung over her shoulder in answer to my question repeated.

"But you said you weren't going back."

"Can't I change my mind, Grandmother?"

"You don't need to be rude," I said sulking.

I toiled in her wake, and Corduroy in mine. The pace she set soon had us puffing. Miss Gray is one of those young women who do outdoor things better than most men. She never fainted in her life, and nerves are a fairy tale to

her. It always ruffles my temper and my vanity to do a twosome with her at golf.

"Hello, you people! Just in time for lunch. Glad to see you, Damron," sang out Halloway cheerily as we emerged from the aspens into view at the rear of the cliff.

A most appealing luncheon was set forth on the white table cloth spread on a camp table among the boulders. Halloway, in his shirt sleeves, was making coffee, opening cans of deviled ham, unpacking a box of fried chicken, and otherwise endeavoring to be several places at once. He fell immediately to issuing orders.

"Bring that box of ice with the bottles in it from the wagon, John. I say, Damron, do you know how to broil bacon? Well, you'll never learn younger. Shake those coals down and set to work, my son. And don't let the coffee boil over." His enthusiasm was contagious. I found myself obeying him mechanically. "You might unpack the sandwiches, Kate. We're going to have the jolliest little lunch you ever saw. I suspect you are hungry. Scudding over these hills is great for the appetite. By the way, you made a fine run of it." He was so genial and friendly to her that one could hardly believe he knew that his confederate had just brought her back under the menace of his revolver.

Miss Gray probably thought his assurance was akin to cheek. At any rate she gave him the full benefit of her unwillowy five foot seven. He met with smiling admiration her level indignant eyes; and indeed the girl's long curves, her frank good looks, her flashing sunburnt beauty, had led captive many a man's fancy. Turning on her heel, she joined her father. Simon Gray, multimillionaire, was seated morosely on a rock, frowning down into the Garden of the Gods with blazing eyes. Far below a dozen dwarfed carriages might be seen wheeling along the red ribbon of road, and many burros with tourists on their backs crawled like ants among the rocks, but for all practical purposes the grim-eyed captain of industry was as much a prisoner as if the gates of a jail had closed on him.

His dignity was too precious to be risked in a futile attempt to escape from the long-legged powerful young athlete. Possibly it was because I was so interested in the situation that I burnt the bacon to a crisp. Miss Grey, with one of her sudden changes of humor, drove me from the fire and broiled the bacon herself. The truth is that despite her frowns the girl was enjoying herself hugely. The excitement of a new experience filled through her blood.

I joined Mr. Gray and we conversed in whispers. He explained to me the absolute necessity of his being in Denver that afternoon to attend an important meeting of the Copper Consolidated Corporation. It was the day of the biennial election of officers. He had bought Consolidated stock sufficient to win the control from the present management, but without his presence or his proxies the old management would still be able to carry the election and reinstate itself. James Halloway was president of the Consolidated, and the two men had been fighting for control more years than one.

"Last call for dinner in the dining car," sang out Halloway, and notwithstanding our lack of harmony the sharp air of the Rockies had made us hungry enough to sink, for the moment, at least, all differences. Halloway, easy, alert, and masterful, dispensed refreshments with debonair hospitality to his unwilling guests.

"Finest bacon I ever ate. It would be a pleasure to have you for a housekeeper, Miss Gray," our host tossed out audaciously.

"You are such a good provider, Mr. Halloway, that I am sure it would be a pleasure to be your housekeeper," returned Miss Gray demurely. "And if I neglected my duties you could always send your man out to shoot at me."

"Ah! That only shows my solicitude to detain you. One couldn't bear the idea of having you leave our party, and yet one couldn't in common politeness desert Mr. Gray to follow you. It remained only to send a message *via* John requesting you to return."

"Well, he delivered it," the girl said, dimpling reminiscently.

Halloway smiled. "I'm afraid

John is a little abrupt sometimes."

Her eyes mocked him boldly. "In your profession of highwayman, abruptness, one would think, might sometimes be essential."

"It was cruel of you to desert us without warning," he said, ignoring her irony.

"I went to get help."

"That was good of you, but we did not really need it," he returned, misunderstanding her promptly. "Though of course we are very glad to have Damron with us."

"I suppose you know that it will be a criminal offense to keep Mr. Gray here till night as you threaten. You invited him here to a picnic. You have no right to detain him a moment longer than he desires. Your outrageous course is very much against the law, Mr. Halloway," I said stiffly.

He looked politely interested. "Is it? No, I didn't know just how illegal it was. Of course I guessed I was skating on thin ice, but the truth is that I didn't get legal advice. That shows the advantage of having a lawyer along when one goes buccaneering. How much could they give me, Damron?"

"You'll not think it so much of a joke when you are behind the bars."

"No, I daresay not. I expect I would better enjoy it while I have the opportunity. Try one of these peaches, Miss Gray." He leaned against a rock and smoked the placid post-prandial cigar of him whose soul is at peace. I, too, had lit up, but my mind was far from equable. I was possessed by the vision of a headlong generous girl under the fascination of this charming young vagabond. Yet I confess that for myself I admired as much as I disliked his dare-devil indifference to consequences, though for the life of me I could not guess what his game was or how it could advantage him to detain the Copper King on this mountain top against his will.

He expounded his easy philosophy with airy candor. "After all, laws are made for man, not man for the laws. Mr. Gray is a capitalist, and he can tell you that laws are to be obeyed with discretion. There would not be any use in having them if somebody did not break them

occasionally. Well, this is my day off. I'm playing ping-pong with the statutes of Colorado"

"But why?" I demanded. "What good does it do you?"

"Oh come, Damron! Mayn't I have a secret or two of my own? I don't suppose you ever explained publicly just why you happen to be spending your vacation in Colorado instead of Timbuctoo."

I fear I blushed. Glancing covertly at my reason, I found it the fairest under the sun, but too present to admit of discussion.

Suddenly Simon Gray cut crisply into the talk for the first time.

"Of course I understand why you are holding me here, Halloway. You are working under instructions from your father to keep me until after the election this afternoon. But the thing is too bare-faced. It won't hold in law. It's a conspiracy."

Halloway's masterful eyes looked straight at him.

"I have not seen or heard from my father in two years, Mr. Gray. He does not have anything to do with his scalawag son. You do not need to look beyond me to place the responsibility for this. But you're right in one thing. I intend that you shall not reach Denver in time for the Copper Consolidated meeting."

They were both dominant men, and their eyes met like the flash of steel.

"No? Why not?" asked Gray quietly, his lids narrowing to long watchful slits.

"Because you are going there to take what doesn't belong to you—to vote away from my father and his associates the control of a business which they have given twenty years of their lives to build. Theirs is a legitimate business enterprise. They developed and extended it gradually. It grew to be a big thing. Then you took a fancy for copper. You——"

"You don't know what you are talking about young man. I am going there to take what the law allows me—what I have bought and paid for in the open market," broke in Gray harshly.

"Yes, the law allows it to you, and it doesn't allow me to interfere. That is where the law is defective. It is true, too,



DRAWN BY F. DE FORREST SCHOOL

"In a world primeval."

that you have manipulated the market in such a way as to get temporary control of a majority of the stock. But that does not affect the fact that my father and his friends have the moral right to direct the affairs of the Consolidated. Their whole life is bound up in it. You are interested simply for speculative purposes. They have earned the right to direct its affairs. You haven't."

"Such talk is sheer folly. You do not understand finance, sir. You have been living outside of the currents of business. The matter is a plain business one, not an ethical or sentimental affair at all."

Halloway's daring eyes swept whimsically across the table and rested momentarily on Katherine. "I am trying to keep it on a business basis so that sentiment may not interfere, sir."

Then Katherine spoke with silken cruelty. "You have a very flattering opinion of my father, Mr. Halloway. It makes his daughter proud to know that one of such notable achievement thinks so highly of him."

Halloway bowed, a sardonic smile on his good-looking face. "I can hardly expect my course to commend itself to Miss Gray," he said simply.

Miss Katherine's dark flashing eyes showed their anger at the presumption of

this lawless, high-handed youth. She had, in company with many charming women, a capacity for injustice, but she had, too, a quick instinctive appreciation for fine points of character. Her feelings were outraged that this young man, who had once wanted to marry her and who still held much fascination for her, had taken advantage of his position as host to overreach her father. But she was very much a creature of moods, and I knew her well enough to fear the revulsion which would follow when she began to take into account his motive—loyalty to a father who had disowned him. And I was certain that even now there was running through her rage an admiration of his audacity that would remain when the anger had evaporated.

Just now, however, she treated his remarks in very cavalier fashion. The burden of such conversation as there was rested on Halloway. It consisted for the most part in genially ironical remarks on the charms of an outdoor life. Katherine was aloofly viewing the scenery with occasional side-shot glances at the offending youth; I watched events in a moody silence, and Corduroy still discussed his dinner some fifty yards from us. As for Simon Gray, he sat in a brown study, his eyes fixed intently on a syphon he did not see. I wondered what plan

was filtering into that alert, fertile brain of his.

I was soon to learn. Halloway carried over to Corduroy a bottle of ale, and in his absence the Copper King found chance to enlist his daughter in the scheme. Presently Miss Katherine strolled leisurely toward the cluster of great brown rocks which cropped out near the edge of the bluff. She carried a magazine with her.

"You're not going to run away again, Kate," Halloway called after her.

She shook her head.

"Word of honor?"

"Word of honor," she called gaily back to him. "But if you doubt—"

Her smile was an invitation. Halloway did not accept it at once, but, plainly eager to be off, stuck to the magnate for a long ten minutes. Then, "Hang duty!" he said, and with a word of caution to his accomplice, he disappeared after her behind the rocks. His long shadow had scarcely trailed out of view before old Gray and a flask of old Scotch were laying siege to Corduroy. The task of sapping his loyalty was no easy one. It took thirty minutes of argument—of threats, cajolery, promises, interspersed with frequent internal applications of the contents of the flask—to win him over. There were times when I despaired of hooking our shy fish, and even after he had swallowed the bait he fought against being landed. Every moment I expected to see Halloway's impudent curly head rising over the brow of the hill. I was as nervous as a youngster awaiting a caning, but they don't make them more cool and game than old Gray was. Our joint pocket books happened to carry five hundred twenty-five dollars, and it took all we had except some silver change to buy a release. But in the end I had the satisfaction of seeing the rotund millionaire and Corduroy legging it down the hill toward Manitou. I am not going to pretend that I have often spent as bad a quarter of an hour as the one which followed, during which I saw their figures lessen in the distance. It was not until they had reached the red thread of the valley road that I breathed freely.

I was ready now for the villain to re-enter, and, as if pat to his cue, the allur-

ing vagabond I had cast for the part sauntered into view. He was very much engrossed with his companion, and—I noticed it with a pang of envy—she with him. Both of them seemed always to radiate health and vitality, but my jaundiced eyes found about them now a scarce decently subdued sparkle of exhilaration. They were in a world primeval and everybody else forgotten. There have been times when I have trod air and breathed champagne myself, but that did not make me any less sulky now. I resented to the bottom of my soul their Eden from which I was excluded.

They were almost on me before they wakened to things mundane.

"Hello, Damron!" Halloway looked over the plateau and brought his eyes back to me. "Where's Mr. Gray?"

Katherine started and looked guilty. I verily believe that till this moment the minx had forgotten she was in a conspiracy to worst him.

I pointed to the disappearing specks. "On his way to a telegraph office. He is going to have the Consolidated election postponed till to-morrow," I said with malicious triumph.

"What did you do with John?"

"Bought him. You should have stayed here. If you want a thing well done, you know!"

"Oh! You seem to have been quite active." He looked long at the figures through a pair of field glasses. "Why didn't you go along?" he asked presently.

"I thought I would stay and break the news of our little surprise to you," I said tartly.

He turned his genial, impudent smile on me. "That was good of you, Damron. You deserve something for that." His eyes met Katherine's for an instant. She nodded, blushing. He tucked her arm under his, and they beamed down on me. "We have a little surprise, too. Miss Gray and I are engaged to be married. We arranged it while you were buying my partner in crime."

I offered my congratulations with a wooden face.

Katherine has always been able to twist her father round that supple little finger of hers. It did not surprise me at all to

read in the papers two days later that an adjustment of the affairs of the C. C. C. had been made satisfactory to the warring factions and that by this arrangement President Halloway was allowed to retain his position and continue his policy. The breach between Bob Halloway and his father was immediately healed. Friends industriously circulated the information that the difference had been due merely to the clashing of two proud natures

which did not understand each other. They point to the fact that since his marriage Bob has been in every way equal to the business responsibilities of his important position in the Consolidated. One understands that he has now entirely sown his wild oats. He reaps golden opinions everywhere.

I don't join in the general chorus much myself—but I'm hanged if I can hate him as much as I would like.

The Ambassador to the Court of St. James

BY JAMES BARR

For the first time in history a real Texan had been elected President of the United States of America.

For the first time in history a real Texan had been appointed to fill the reasonably responsible position of American Ambassador to the Court of St. James.

For the first time in history a twenty-five thousand ton battleship, propelled by turbines and commanded by a real Texan crossed the ocean flying the Stars and Stripes.

The good people of Europe, taking this combination into consideration, expressed no great surprise when news of the astonishing sequel leaked out. Leak out it did, although who told will never be known in all probability. It was too good to be kept a secret. His Majesty, the King of England, was the first person to enjoy a hearty laugh over the head of the matter; indeed, he was really the first person to whom the opportunity came. His Majesty seized it.

Dave Reynolds led the initial great raid across the border into Mexico. In fact, his was the initial, the concluding and the only raid; there was no need for any other. Reynolds had been born on a ranch, swaddled in buckskin, cradled on a broncho and taught his letters by many and various unconventional pedagogues ranging in style from a stampede of steers to a wiping-out expedition against the Apaches. He had met everything that

travels in the West from a centipede to a cyclone, and had learned to measure distances by Winchester and to calculate by Colt. He was in his prime when the great row with Mexico broke out over too much application of the Monroe Doctrine, aggravated by an overdose of Panama Canal, and with a cloud of Western men behind him, Dave Reynolds was into the heart of Mexico before the regular forces of the United States could lay hands on him to hold him back. The whole world rang with the doings of Dave Reynolds, and his right hand man, Lou Somerset, and their straight-limbed, clear-eyed, hard-riding, sure-shooting irregulars. The army marched into Mexico in time to take possession. Dave Reynolds had done the fighting.

It will be readily understood that the blazing forth of this hitherto unknown man came as a god-send to the great political party which had been in power for so many years. The party saw in Dave Reynolds four years more. Before the advent of Reynolds, the prospect of the party looked cheerless, for, strange to tell, the voting people of a country, any country, have a peculiar habit of yearning for a change once in a generation, no matter how well they have been served by the powers that be. Although due almost to the point of over-due, this change was not to take place for another four years. Dave Rey-

nolds carried the presidential chair as he had carried the City of Mexico.

All through the presidential campaign Lou Somerset seconded Reynolds as ably as he had done during the dash to Mexico, but after the counting of the votes he disappeared. The president-elect used every endeavour to trace his lieutenant, but failed to find out anything more than that Somerset had returned to Texas and from there had ridden into the newly annexed territories. However, at the inauguration Lou turned up to hear his old-time comrade, and now the President, deliver his address to the assembled people. Even in that mighty throng President Reynolds "spotted" his "pard." For Dave Reynolds was of the West, westy.

"Lou," said the President, when the two were seated alone, the ceremonies of the day shoved behind them, "Lou, this is the second campaign you've carried me through. I'm much obliged to you, Lou."

"I've done nothing, Dave," said Somerset.

"That's all right, Lou. I know what you've done and what you haven't done, and I tell you, what you've done is all a man could do, and what you haven't done could be written in large capital letters on the edge of a Mexican silver dollar. What are you going to take for your share?"

"I don't want nothing, Dave."

"I know you don't, but you are going to have it or this presidential chair is no use to me. What would you like—the Army?"

"There ain't going to be no work for the Army. I've looked all over the map and I can't see a sign of a flying bullet in any corner of it."

"That's so. I guess you're right there," admitted the President, "and I tell you straight, Lou, that I hope everything will be as quiet as a country church on a week day for the next four years. It sobered one to be sitting where I am. Besides, it would be an awful thing for other fellows to be fighting somewhere and me roped and hobbled here in Washington. But to get back, what would you like?"

Somerset stretched his long legs to their full length, thrust his hands deep into his trouser pockets and gazed at his toes, idly

tapping the one against the other.

"Come, now, Lou. You'd like something. What *would* you like?"

"Well, since you put it that way, I'll own up. I'd like to—"

Somerset paused.

"Like to what?" quietly urged the President.

"Well, Dave, you see it's like this. My folks come from England. My old mother used to speak of that part of the world as 'Home,' and, for that matter, so did my father when there was nobody about—sometimes. I've often thought I'd like to go over there to see what sort of stamping ground—but, pshaw!"

Somerset jerked his head savagely to one side as if butting away an absurd proposition.

"Lou," said the President in that low, yet enthusiastic voice of his, "Lou, that's just where I should like you to go, and just where you shall go. Our man over there is coming home, so they tell me. Some names for the post of ambassador have been put before me, but I guess I looked over the list in too big a hurry, for I don't remember seeing your name among them. But yours is there, Lou, right on the top of the list, standing out bold and bulky against the blue of the sky, while the other fellows' names are dimmed and blurred with the dust raised by their own stam-pede."

Mr. Louis Somerset grinned. That was all he said.

When President Reynolds took possession of his high office, he found himself, at his own request, furnished with a cabinet, each member of which had been chosen by the leaders of the party. Each was a safe man, well versed in the larger ways of the world at large. Perhaps there was at first a little anxiety at Washington as to the manner in which the new president would conduct himself while in office, but if so, there need have been none at all. It is now recognized that no more sagacious brain had occupied the position of president since Lincoln. At first sight, some of his sayings and doings seemed risky, but if they were risky, they turned out all right in the end, and the end is the important position of everything—almost. In initiating the new president to his man-

DRAWN BY ROY H. BROWN

"Reynolds had met everything that travels in the West, from a centipede to a cyclone."





DRAWN BY ROY H. BROWN

"The Secretary of State took the paper and glanced at it."

fold duties the Secretary of State took the leading part. The Secretary was gifted and experienced, a man so sensible that he recognized his own political limitations. In his day he had represented his country abroad, and that, too, with distinction, and since his return to his native land he, by an equivocally-worded dispatches on matters international, had placed his country in the fore-front of the world's politics. He knew matters and men. In President Reynolds he recognized a genuine man, and he unselfishly bent his whole energies towards making smooth the first part of the four years' journey.

A few days after the interview between the President and Mr. Louis Somerset, the Secretary of State brought to the attention of the President the matter of the appointment of an Ambassador to the Court of St. James.

"I have decided on the man," said the President.

"Very good." The Secretary was about to proceed with other matters when the President asked quietly:

"Are you interested in knowing whom I have chosen?"

"I am, Mr. President," admitted the Secretary.

"His name is the first on your list."

"Mr. Hart? He is a good man."

The President shook his head.

"Hart isn't the name as I recollect it," he said.

"I thought Mr. Hart's name was the first on the list?"

Again the President shook his head. "I think not," he said. "Your list is on that desk."

The Secretary of State took the paper and glanced at it. There at the top of the

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paper written in great round letters were the words, "Mr. Louis Somerset."

Mr. Secretary's jaw dropped, but for a second only. A smile gradually grew and overspread his serious, pale face. He looked at the President.

"What do you think of the appointment?" asked the President.

"Excellent."

The President bent a piercing gaze on his minister.

"Honest?"

"Honest."

The President's face lit up like a morning in June.

"Now, I'm real glad to hear that, for I know you mean what you say. Lou is all right where ever you put him, if folks treat him square. That's the only thing I'm worried about. I'm not afraid of Lou, but, say, how will they treat such a man over there among the crowns, and coronets and things? You have been there. What do you think?"

Mr. Secretary of State sat down upon a revolving chair, placed his elbows on its arms, leaned well forward, and, as he spoke, continued to slew from side to side.

"Mr. President, you have not the slightest cause to worry. Mr. Somerset is the very man for the post. Over there they will take to him as they take to roast beef or to a thoroughbred horse, if I may be allowed to use such homely similes in connection with a post so exalted as that of American Ambassador to the gorgeous Court of St. James. Frankness and fearlessness are the gods of the English, although they pretend to worship others. They love a first-class fighting man. Such an one can do no wrong in their eyes. Mr. President, the Mexicans tried their best to kill Somerset and did not touch him. The English will—just about."

Again the President's lips curled into a smile.

"I'm glad to hear what you say, and if they kill Lou we may as well let 'em annex us with the rest of the world, quietly and without fuss. It will be bound to happen."

Before the Honourable Louis Somerset sailed to present his credentials to Edward VII, by the Grace of God of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and

Ireland and of the British Dominions beyond the Seas, King, Defender of the Faith, Emperor of India, a deputation of representative Texans reached Washington to present a petition to the new Ambassador. To celebrate the annexation of that vast country to the south of her, Texas had made up her collective mind to provide for the peoples of the world a Fair of such magnitude as to overlord all fairs hitherto held. The promoters, eager to do the thing thoroughly, had set their heads upon securing the attendance of some outstanding personage from Europe, if possible, a crowned head. Hence, the deputation which asked the Hon. Louis Somerset to use his best endeavours to induce the King of England to be the guest of the United States in general, and the State of Texas in particular, even if for but a few days of the life of the Exposition.

The Hon. Mr. Somerset made his first public address as American Ambassador-elect to the Court of St. James. He said:

"Gentlemen of Texas: Texas doesn't need to beg of me nothing. All Texas has to do is to tell me what she wants that I can get for her, or can try to get for her, and be sure I'll do my level best for her. I'm Texan born and raised, I'm Texan hat and boots. Texas can look to me to do my level best for her every time. I can't promise Texas a King, but if there's a King going, I'll have him for Texas or know the reason why. Gentlemen, of Texas, I guess that's all the talk the situation requires."

After the deputation had started for Texas and sunshine, the Hon. Louis Somerset swung himself astraddle of his horse and went for a long, hard gallop. Heart and soul urged him to do his very best for his native state. As he galloped he thought fast and furiously, and presently all his thoughts focussed into an idea. He took that idea as in the palm of his hand and examined it over and over again, and the more he looked at it the more he liked it. So he carried the idea to the President, who, in turn, looked at it and liked it, and forthwith sent an urgent message to Captain Turner of the turbine battleship *Oklahoma*, then lying at Brooklyn. When Capt. Turner

reached Washington, the able men from Texas put their heads together. The Ambassador explained the needs of Texas and the means he had devised for supplying those needs. His statement was short and concise.

"It can be done," admitted Capt. Turner, with a sailor's frankness, and immediately followed on with a continuation of that frankness. "On the face of it," he said, "it is a hair-raising conception, but I think, taking certain or uncertain risks, the chances are that it will work out all right. Let it be clearly understood that I require definite orders. There's a yardarm on my ship that I have no wish to try to break with my neck."

"That's right. My orders go, I take it?" said the President.

"Certainly, Mr. President," replied the sailor.

"There is no need to trouble anyone else with the matter, Secretary of State, or the Interior or Agriculture, or anything?"

"Not so far as I am concerned, Mr. President. Your orders are all I require," replied Capt. Turner.

"I don't suppose real trouble is likely to grow out of the matter, even if things do come to a slight hitch?" said the President.

"Not with England," agreed the sailor. "I own up I would not like to try it on with some other countries I could name."

"There won't be no trouble," said the Hon. Louis Somerset decidedly. "I'll see to that. Even if there was a danger, it's for Texas, you know."

"Then the matter's settled here and now," said the President. "Captain Turner, you sit down over there, take pen and paper, and write out whatever orders you require. You know how to word those things and I do not. I'll sign."

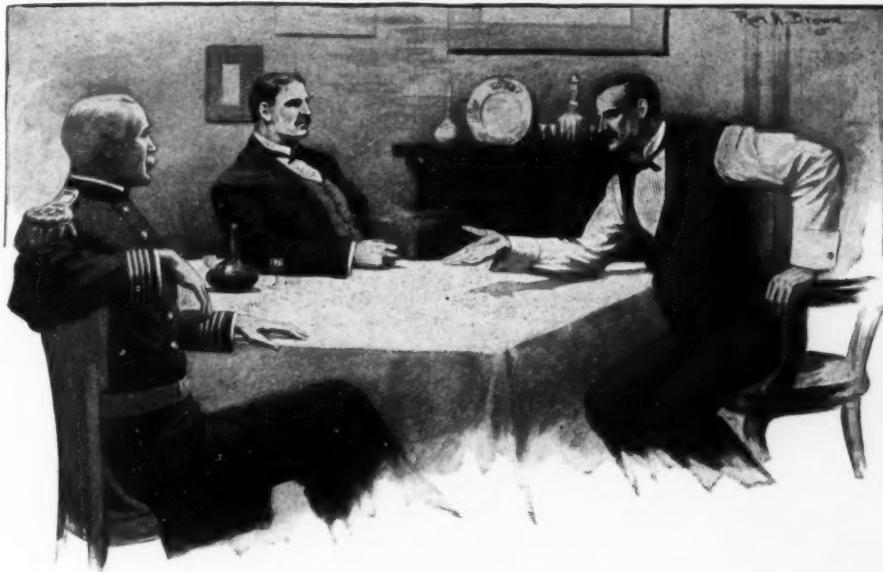
The thing was done.

The Ambassador from America took London by storm. London took the Ambassador from America by storm. It cannot, in strictly honest sense, be recorded that the new Ambassador did his whole duty. The Lord Mayors implored him to dine, Countesses begged him to dance, bazars vowed that they would not open at all unless he came and opened them, but the Hon. Louis Somerset

scraped out of more of these ceremonies than he had any right to escape. Truth is that he soon fell in with hosts of men who, like himself, had led lusty, adventurous lives, and he chose their society as against all others. Here they were gathered together in London, at the Travellers' Club, the Sports' Club, the Army and Navy Club; men who had fought through waspish wars on that terrible northwest frontier of India, men who had led black and copper-colored troops through the jungles of Africa, men who had panted under the fierce sun of the Sudan, men who had stalked wild beasts and wilder men in every quarter of the world, adventurers all, rich in good skins, tobacco, heads and tales. Many of his days were spent at Aldershot with the officers of the army, and many with—but who can blame the Hon. Louis Somerset for choosing the company of the lion hunters of the desert rather than that of the reception room?

His first appearance at court established him as a welcome figure there. One of nature's gentlemen, etiquette of a formal, mouthing kind troubled him not at all, for he gave it never a thought. Among the select colony of diplomats, each of whom danced attendance at the Court of St. James, he shone as refreshing to the sight as a bunch of wild flowers in a formal garden. He dined with the King and enjoyed himself exceedingly. He found that the questions arising between the governments of England and America were simple and of easy adjustment. The only anxiety was that International Exposition at Austin, Texas. He urged the claims of the Fair with great good humour and remarkable persistency, and in all legitimate ways. Plead as he might, however, the arrangement so dear to the heart of Texas could not be consummated. His Majesty's engagements did not permit him to be absent from the kingdom for such a length of time as a visit to Austin would necessitate. However, everyone from the King down to the humblest mayor in all the United Kingdom joined to make England's exhibit at Austin such as had never before been packed off to a foreign shore.

The International Exposition was



DRAWN BY ROY H. BROWN

"The Ambassador explained the needs of Texas."

opened by President Reynolds in person. As a certain irreverent newspaper had it, "Dave did it," and certainly "Dave did it" dramatically. Upon a gaily bedecked dais of flags and flowers the President took his stand and delivered one of those laconic speeches for which he had already become famous. This finished, a gold mounted revolver was handed to him. For a brief moment President Reynolds examined the weapon curiously, then whirling round he cast one swift glance at the main building of the exposition. The next instant a revolver shot rang out on the air, a gold bulls-eye protruding from a golden target was flattened by the heavy ball of the bullet. Instantly flags broke to the breeze, bells flung themselves in a flurry of frenzy, shrill whistles tore the air to shreds, wheels began to drone and hum, a multitude of people lifted their voices to the skies and the whole vast Exposition gathered itself together and flung itself into life and motion. Dave did it!

The month of June! England lay like a spacious garden. The Hon. Louis Somerset sat entranced with the land of

his forefathers. Such a springtime as this he had not dreamed of as possible in any part of this wide, wide world. England was ablaze of blossom; redolence of an hundred sweet sorts swam in the bosom of the gentle breezes, trees tossed their branches in ecstasy, grasses shone in green, buttercups and daisies grew in broad flurries of white and gold sown by the hands of the gods and by the hedges stalked the lordly cock pheasant in his resplendent dress. The American Ambassador could not withdraw his face from the window of the Pullman car which sped him from London to Portsmouth on his way to greet his friend, Captain Turner, of the turbine battleship *Oklahoma*. An hour later a special train was due to follow bearing the king's Most Gracious Majesty on his way to inspect the mighty American ship lately arrived in Portsmouth Harbour and now lying within sight of Nelson's flagship Victory. The old and the new lay cheek by jowl.

"I had merely to mention the matter to the King and he said 'yes,'" said the Hon. Louis Somerset to Captain Turner as the two walked the quarterdeck. Then

he added: "You smashed the record to smithereens and opened the eyes of the world coming across, captain."

"Four days from anchor to anchor wasn't so dusty," admitted Captain Turner. "She can do better, but I was letting her take no chances."

"Maybe you'll take some chances going back?"

Captain Turner grinned.

"Maybe."

The royal train arrived punctual to the second. His Majesty was received aboard aboard the *Oklahoma* to the thunder of a royal salute, at the first roar of which the battleship, as if to the touch of a magic wand, broke into a wondrous flush of bunting, myriad tinted, brilliant dyed. Amid the cannons' roar the brassy notes of the battleship's band was heard playing, "God Save the King," from sheets of music, headed "America." His Majesty's face beamed with pleasure as he shook hands with Captain Turner.

By arrangement, as soon as the King boarded, the mighty ship swung under weigh to show her paces out in the channel. As she threaded her way out of the harbor not so much as a tatter of smoke escaped from her four funnels, so skilfully were the furnaces fed, and before a quarter of an hour had passed, His Majesty was being sped along at a pace he had never before traveled on the face of the waters. The wind of speed roared along the decks and snored among the masts and funnels. To the right lay the Isle of Wight, distant and beautiful, to the left the low coast rising to Selsey Hill, and in front the blue waters of the historic Channel. Across Spithead the battleship sped, swung round the Foreland, heaved past Culver Cliff, smoked over Sandown Bay, and weathering the Undercliff, headed westward.

When abreast of St. Catherine's Point, His Majesty quitted the bridge to prepare for lunch.

Accompanying the King walked the Hon. Lou Somerset. Behind followed Captain Turner and that bluff old sea-dog, Admiral of the Fleet, Sir James Samson, D. S. O.

Captain Turner spoke:

"I hope my arrangements for the voy-

age will meet with His Majesty's approval. Of course, a battleship is not an Atlantic liner, still less a royal yacht."

"My dear Captain," said the old Admiral heartily, "everything aboard is as everything should be aboard a smart ship belonging to a smart navy. I never trod the deck of a trimmer, cleaner ship."

"Thank you, Admiral. Anyhow, all going well, the voyage will only take a very few days. To tell the truth, I hope to make Fire Island in ninety hours."

"On your return journey?"

"On this trip. Ninety hours from the time we weighed just now—12:50 I made it."

Admiral of the Fleet Sir James Samson, D. S. O., brought up with a turn.

"Fire Island?" he barked.

"Yes, Admiral."

"This trip?"

"Yes. I'll run into New York, of course."

"Fire Island! New York! What do you mean?"

"I can take the King around to Galveston if his Majesty prefers, but President Reynolds thought that most likely the King would rather land at New York, so as to see some of the country on his way to the International Exposition at Austin. I know it is a long railroad journey, and if His Majesty says the word, I'll swing round to Galveston and have him there as quick as any train would do the trip."

The aged Admiral placed his two hands on the shoulders of the youthful captain and looked him squarely in the eyes.

"We're sailors both, Captain Turner. I'm of the Navy, you're of the Navy. Tell me as a sailor to a sailor what—the devil—you-mean?"

"I hope there's been no secret about it," began the Captain, wishing to break the news gently to the Admiral, but Sir James bawled—

"Out with it."

"Admiral, I mean that at the command of the President of the United States of America, I am taking His Majesty, the King of England, across the Atlantic on his way to visit the International Exposition now in progress at Austin, Texas."

"Good God!"

The aged Admiral's hands fell to his side, and for some moments he gazed helplessly round the mighty battleship, after which his eyes sought the rapidly receding coast of England. A stern his country lay, a dreamy shimmer of green; ahead the broadening Channel spread, leading to the Atlantic.

"You mean what you say?" demanded the Admiral.

"Sir James, my instructions are that I am to convey His Majesty safely across unless—"

"Unless! I'm blazed glad there is an 'unless' about it," shouted the profane, if gallant Admiral. "Unless what?"

"Unless His Majesty intimates a wish to cross by some other ship. His Majesty may choose to cross a little later or by some other ship. If His Majesty will intimate such an intention, of course—"

"Supposing His Majesty intimates no such intention?"

"Then I will take it that His Majesty chooses to honor this ship with his presence. We have made every preparation for his comfort, and I assure you, Sir James, that America will feel highly delighted that the King of England chooses to cross the Atlantic under the Stars and Stripes."

Again the aged Admiral gazed pathetically towards the north. St. Albans Head was drawing abreast.

"I must speak with the King," said Sir James, as, with the agility of a midshipman, he darted for the companionway. Captain Turner remained where he stood. His face was grave, for he knew what a King means to his people.

There is little ceremony about a battleship, and, indeed, Sir James Samson was a peculiarly privileged person in court circles, yet never in all his long life had he entered the royal presence with so few preliminaries as he did this afternoon. His Majesty had retired to a cabin especially set aside for him, a cabin which adjoined that in which luncheon was to be served. In this latter stood the Hon. Lou Somerset gazing out of a porthole at the waters spudding by. Glancing round he was in time to see the aged Admiral disappear into the royal cabin as a rabbit bolts into a burrow. For the space of

perhaps two minutes there followed dead silence, this on a sudden shattered by a hearty burst of right royal laughter.

"Texas is all right," almost shouted the Honorable Lou, as with a most unambassadorial bound he made for the deck where he grasped the hand of his



DRAWN BY ROY H. BROWN

"The Honorable Lou Somerset, gazing out of a port-hole at the waters."

friend the captain with the grip of a vice. The two exchanged glances but no word. Words were not required.

A few minutes later Admiral of the Fleet, Sir James Samson, stood upon the quarterdeck confronting Captain Turner. The two sailors saluted.

"His Majesty commands me to say

that he is delighted with the ship, Captain Turner, and that His Majesty will have pleasure in conveying his thanks to the President of the United States for the privilege afforded His Majesty of inspecting the ship and also for the kind offer to place her at his disposal for his trip across the Atlantic. His Majesty, however, is sorry that engagements already entered into forbid his crossing at the moment, indeed, for some six weeks yet, and he cannot think of detaining so noble a ship for such a length of time. His Majesty, therefore, will cross in his royal yacht."

Captain Turner bowed.

"His Majesty's pleasure is our President's only desire."

Admiral Sir James bowed.

"We will now put about," said Captain Turner.

Admiral and captain both bowed.

The luncheon was most successful. His Majesty's spirits were high and his praise of everyone and everything aboard unstinted, and when at Spithead the anchor dug its broad fluke into the mud

His Majesty quitted the good ship *Oklahoma* with many manifestations of goodwill toward all aboard and the great republic from which they hailed. Next morning the *Times* announced:

"Before taking leave of the officers of the American battleship *Oklahoma* yesterday, His Majesty the King was graciously pleased to intimate his intention of visiting the World's Fair at Austin, Texas, before its close. The whole empire will rejoice at the drawing tighter of the bonds that already bind in friendship the two great English-speaking nations—"

Admiral of the Fleet, Sir James Samson, D. S. O., held the hand of Captain Silas Turner.

"Before I leave you, Captain, I would like to ask you as a sailorman to sailorman would you have carried us across if—?"

Captain Turner looked the aged Admiral in the eye.

"I had sealed orders to open when abreast of Portland Hill. We did not get so far. I don't know just to what lengths the President was prepared to go—for Texas."

The Cape Conspiracy

BY OWEN OLIVER

When my father died, just as I was leaving Oxford, the estate proved to be heavily encumbered, and I found it necessary to seek a profession. My relatives gave me a deal of advice, but little real help; and I found my lack of experience or special training an absolute bar to anything but poorly paid clerical employment. I had almost resolved to accept a junior mastership in a school which would put up with indifferent learning for the sake of athletic proficiency, when Mr. Vaughan, of whom I had heard my father speak with great esteem, called to ask whether he could be of any service to me.

He was a "confidential political agent," he informed me, and had served the Government as such under many names, and in many disguises. During the six weeks that I was with him, he

played so many parts, and with such skill, that he seemed to lose his identity in them. Probably this is the reason why I cannot describe him more exactly than as a slight, fair man of about thirty-five, with a small-featured, hairless face, and unusually large, dark eyes.

It was clear that he had a great regard for my father, who, he told me, had helped him with great chivalry at a moment of especial difficulty; and that he had been in his confidence. So when he proposed to employ me as his assistant I jumped at the idea.

"I am afraid I sha'n't be much use at first," I warned him, "but I shall improve with practice." He smiled.

"You won't have much time for practice. We sail for the Cape on Saturday in the *Dover Castle*. I don't need

technical assistance; only courage, honesty and obedience. I'm satisfied. Now as to terms. I'll pay your expenses and give you £20 a month for pocket money. Otherwise it is a case of payment by results. If we succeed I'll give you £5,000." I nearly jumped out of my chair with astonishment. "You must learn not to show surprise at anything. It's a good plan to grip something tightly when you expect to be startled."

I gripped the arms of my chair ostentatiously.

"What is the result; and what are the means?" I asked.

"We sha'n't quarrel about means. As to results—well, I'll trust your father's son. The Government wishes to stifle quietly what is known as 'The Cape Conspiracy'—a gang of the worst rascals in South Africa, where rascals abound. It is primarily an organization for financial purposes, but it uses political means to achieve its ends. It is believed that it aided the Boers during the war, and tried to obtain foreign intervention; and that it is now fostering enmity to the British rule in South Africa. Our object is to obtain proof of this. For reasons of state it is not desirable to proceed openly against the members, and I doubt if they will be punished even if we obtain the proof; but the Government would then have sufficient hold over them to quash the business.

"The incriminating papers are practically known to be in the possession of Count Ossoski, a Pole—the worst scoundrel of the whole gang; the worst scoundrel of all the scoundrels I have ever known. I have reason to know him. He is now in England; but the association wants the papers at Johannesburg, as they include certain financial agreements between the members. If we were an enlightened country, like Russia, we should simply seize Master Ossoski and take the papers. As we aren't—I am employed. Is there anything else you'd like to know?"

"No," I said, "only—I'm not worth what you offer."

He laid his hand on my shoulder.

"There are two reasons why I make you so large an offer. In the first place, I wish to help you for your father's sake.

In the second place, I would give every penny I possess—I am not a poor man—to succeed in this undertaking. I am not usually revengeful; but I have terrible cause to hate Ossoski—cause such as you could never guess. He is clever and unscrupulous, and I consider it necessary to have an assistant upon whose courage and loyalty I can absolutely rely. I expect these qualities, as a matter of course, from your father's son. Now, I have told you all I can. Will you come?"

"Of course I will come," I said. "Give me my instructions."

"Here is £100 to meet preliminary expenses. Book to Cape Town by Saturday's mail. I shall be aboard, but I shall be disguised, and you won't recognize me. Just make friends and enjoy yourself. When I need you, I will use one word—*Visionary*. Don't show surprise, but find an opportunity of speaking to me alone. Take a revolver. We may have to run risks. Above everything, hold your tongue. You can tell your friends that you are going to try your luck in South Africa—they won't see anything suspicious in that. We'll have a good time together, because—" He changed suddenly from his crisp manner to almost feminine gentleness, "we like one another!"

"Yes," I said emphatically. Then he went.

I made my arrangements as he had directed; and on the following Saturday we started from Southampton, followed by great flocks of screaming sea-gulls.

There were some two hundred passengers in the first saloon of the *Dover Castle*, and I suspected about fifty in turn of being Vaughan, but when we were a week past Madeira I had utterly failed to detect him. This did not prevent me from enjoying the voyage. I played in all the deck cricket and tournaments, danced all the dances, fell in love with Lucy Hardy, and took a violent dislike to Ossoski, a thin-lipped, sandy-haired man, with an evil smile, and a thin, grating voice, who made friends with nobody.

On the evening of the thirteenth day out, I was leaning on the rail, looking at the sea, just after Lucy had gone below for the night, when little Mrs. Filmer—one

of the nicest of my many acquaintances—stopped beside me.

"Your thoughts are worth more than a penny, I suppose?" she asked in her bright, pleasant way.

"If they come true," I agreed. I was thinking of Lucy, of course.

"I sincerely hope they will," she said. "You see, I know them. You can't hope to disguise yourself aboard ship, unless you're a—*visionary!*"

I stifled an exclamation and stared at her. It had occurred to me that Vaughan might be disguised as a female—one of the spectacled, blue-veiled ladies of advanced views—but I could scarcely believe even now that this pretty, lady-like, feminine creature could be a man, although I could detect a resemblance to Vaughan in her features now that I looked for it.

We did not speak for a whole minute. Then she—as I had to call him—laughed.

"You are very properly discreet," she said. "We shall need discretion. If I am not mistaken, Ossoski suspects me,"

"Does he know you? As yourself, I mean?"

"He does not know me as Vaughan. He suspects that I am Ralph Venning, a cousin of his wife. I am rather like him. I'll be candid with you. Two years ago, before I had taken to this profession, I entered Ossoski's rooms to obtain a certain document for his wife's friends. It was one that they had a right to—a forged certificate of her death."

"Is she dead?"

"It is generally believed so. However, that's immaterial. I was made up to look as much like Venning as possible. He was away abroad, and could prove an alibi if he were suspected. I obtained the document and others—sufficient to keep the Countess's property from her husband—but Ossoski met me just outside the house as I was going away. When he missed the papers, he moved heaven and earth to find Venning; but I had become Vaughan. Now he suspects me, and he has people at the Cape who would profess to identify me with Venning—or anybody else. My disguise would be against me, and—well, there are other things that I can't tell you. You'd better keep out of it."

"Not while I can be of service to you," I said stoutly. "What shall I do?"

"He does not suspect you. Watch him when he is watching me, and—here comes somebody. Chaff me about the moon—my eyes—anything. This saucy boy is behaving dreadfully, Mrs. Green—Oh! I'm an old woman, you know. He's just keeping his hand in—Good night."

The next day I was talking to the Count when "Mrs. Filmer" passed with a smile and a nod. He scowled after her.

"Introduce me to her," he asked abruptly.

"I—I hardly know her well enough," I demurred.

He shrugged his shoulders. When she reached us again he bowed.

"May I take a traveler's privilege to introduce myself?" he asked politely.

She tapped on the deck with her foot, and smiled at him archly, as she consented. I could not help admiring Vaughan's composure, as, after a few commonplaces, they walked away together. It was evident that neither wished for my company, so I went to Lucy. Half an hour later "Mrs. Filmer" came and chatted merrily to us. Incidentally, she termed me a "visionary." There was a dance that night, and I promptly asked her for the first waltz. It was "Myosotis," and I shall always hear it mingled with the terrified voice of a woman; for so convincing was Vaughan's disguise, that I could only think of him as such.

"He's found me out, Frank, found me out. It isn't just failure. It's—oh! It's worse than I can tell you—worse than you can dream. 'Ssh! He's coming. Talk nonsense.—Fie, you naughty man! I'm sure it's natural!—He says he'll have me apprehended at Cape Town. I'm at his mercy, unless—'Ssh! Someone will hear. Quite the handsomest man aboard, I think.—It's nothing wrong on my part, but if you knew all, dear boy, you'd pity me.—No, I can't tell you. —Thanks! I think I left my wrap in the corner seat.—Don't think badly of me. Read this, then tear it up.—Ours is the next, is it, doctor? Would you mind sitting it out? I've something to tell you."

I was engaged for every other dance. She was engaged in earnest conversation with the doctor till she suddenly disappeared. So I did not speak to her again. The last dance was with Lucy; and we sat on deck for some time afterwards. When she retired, I thought it wise to go to the smoking room as usual. Ossoski invited me to drink, and I rallied him on not getting a dance with Mrs. Filmer; but he laughed softly. His laugh was a warning against the man.

"She is not clever enough for me," he said complacently.

Then I pleaded sleepiness and went below. I had a cabin to myself, and I fastened the door before I opened Vaughan's letter. It contained bank notes for £100, and this message in pencil:

"Do not intervene without the word, even if you think my life depends on it. If anything happens to me, find out what hotel Ossoski is staying at and stay there, too. Find out when he travels to Jo'burg. When you have done so, walk along Government Avenue at 10 A. M., 4 or 10 o'clock at night, wearing a flower in your buttonhole. Destroy this note.

"Under no circumstances take action without the word. Everything depends on your implicit obedience."

The next day "Mrs. Filmer" did not appear. The following afternoon everyone was horrified to hear that she had died suddenly of heart failure.

"Fortunately," the doctor told me, "we reach Cape Town tomorrow, so we can bury her ashore. She recovered for a few moments before the end. Her last instructions were to tell you that she hoped to meet you again some day. Poor woman!"

It flashed upon me in a moment that Vaughan was not dead, but shamming, and that when we reached Cape Town the next day he hoped to escape.

The following morning I was awakened by the hooting of fog horns. Nothing was visible through the port holes but a dense mist. When the steward brought my tea, he said that we were to anchor in the bay, and defer landing till the fog

lifted. At luncheon time it was thicker than ever, and the good old captain made us a little speech.

"We have had many pleasant functions," he said, "on the voyage. The last is a very sad one. It is impossible to keep any longer the remains of the poor lady who has left us, and I have been unable to arrange to land them. So they will find their last home in the sea. The law requires that the burial shall take place not less than three miles from the shore, I am therefore sending a boat. When they have had time to row a sufficient distance, I shall commence tolling a bell, and shall continue doing this at intervals to guide them back. The undertaking is not without risk, and I ask your prayers for their safe return. The service will take place after they have left the ship."

All heads were bowed for a few moments. Then the passengers slowly rose and passed out. Most of the ladies were wiping their eyes; and the men looked pale and depressed. "Mrs. Filmer" had been a general favorite on board. Ossoski alone looked cheerful. He made some jesting remark to me, but I brushed him angrily aside, and went to my cabin to think out the situation. From Vaughan's note and his farewell message through the doctor I had conjectured that he was only shamming death, and intended either to "come to" from his pretended trance when the passengers had landed, or after he had been carried ashore. As it was, he would probably think he was merely being taken to land till he found himself in the sea. His orders to me were positive enough—"Do not intervene without the word, even if you think my life depends upon it"—and my confidence in him was so great that I would have obeyed him in any event that he could have conceivably foreseen; but it was not possible that he could have foreseen this. I wavered between confiding in the captain and going in the boat to try and give him some hint if he were alive in the ghastly bundle. Finally I decided upon the latter, and went in search of the chief officer.

"When does the—it go?" I asked huskily, when I found him.

He drew a deep breath and took my arm.

"We knew how everyone would feel about it," he said, "so we sent it off while you were at lunch. Hark!"

The bell began tolling. I staggered and nearly fell. Dead or alive, Vaughan was in the sea!

I had a lingering hope that he might have discovered what was happening, and announced the fact that he was alive to those in the boat; but when it came back, it brought only a pale young officer and wild-eyed sailors, who trembled as they reached the deck. The bundle did not sink readily, they said, and some of them declared that they saw the canvas with its load drifting behind them all the way back, as if it were chasing them.

The captain pooh-poohed the idea, and said it was only the fog that had shaken their nerves. He gave orders for a special grog ration, but the sailors still went about shaking their heads. The ladies were tearful, and the men silent. I went below again and sat shuddering and shivering on my berth. I dared not look out of my port-hole for fear of a shapeless bundle that I pictured bobbing up and down on the waters through the fog.

The fog cleared up during the night, and we landed early the next morning? I found that Ossoski was going to the "Mount Nelson" and followed him there, determined to obey Vaughan's instructions to the letter. It relieved my feelings to do something that he had wished; and I thought it just possible that he had written to some confederate ashore, who might know the sign agreed upon and have some further orders for me. On the Saturday after we landed, Ossoski mentioned that he was going up country on Monday night. I put a rose in my buttonhole and walked down the avenue at 10 in the morning and 4 in the afternoon. In the evening I went to see Lucy, who was staying with her brother out at Sea Point, but excused myself at half past nine. I got off the tram at the end of the avenue, and walked up it punctually to time. An old Boer gentleman with a long white beard stopped me in the middle of the avenue.

"Visionary!" he muttered.

"You are a friend of V—" I checked the word, and he laughed in a voice that made my heart thump. It was Vaughan!

"His best friend, and his worst!—Good boy!"

We seized one another's hands and pumped them for a full minute. When I told him how I proposed to go in the boat, and couldn't, and how I felt about it, he nearly wrung my hand off.

"The doctor and his man worked it," he explained. "They put some old rubbish in the bundle and hid me down below—a beastly, damp, dark hole, that smelt horribly of vile water. I felt as if I might be dead. Ugh!—They got me off in the afternoon. It cost £1,000. The doctor wouldn't have done it for that if I hadn't pointed out that for my own sake I could never reappear."

"What!" I cried. "You mean to disappear altogether?"

"I must. It won't be the first time." He laughed bitterly. "Well, when does he go?"

"Monday night. He has a reserved compartment. I've taken a berth in the next one."

"Take the whole compartment. At the station a worthy old Boer—Dr. Von Ry—will appeal to you to allow him to share it. You will reluctantly consent. We will arrange our plans on the journey. Walk here tomorrow night with another flower if it's arranged all right. It must be arranged if it costs another £1,000. If you want money, come here in the afternoon.—Good night, old chap."

I obtained the compartment, and signified the fact as directed, and we set out from Cape Town on Monday night. Our compartment and Ossoski's were those which are usual in the first class carriages of the Cape Government Railway. The seats formed two sleeping berths, and the upper berths folded up against the sides when not required. The windows had wooden shutters to keep out the sun, and each compartment had a long narrow table with flaps between the seats. They opened upon the corridor with sliding doors, which could be bolted at night, when the doors could, however, be opened from outside by the guard's key. The

carriages had high roofs, with ventilating passages at each side, above the carriage proper. At the end of the carriage there was a little platform in the open air, and one could pass by a flexible platform with netted side-rails from one carriage to another. The reason of this description will appear later.

As soon as we closed the door for the night, Vaughan abandoned his assumed character; but he did not speak of Ossoski till the following morning, when he asked me to take an opportunity of engaging him in conversation on the platform.

I sat beside Ossoski at breakfast at Matjesfontein, and tried to engage his sympathy, by complaining of the stuffy habits of the Boer whom I had allowed to share my compartment. He informed me curtly that a good natured fool was the worst fool in the world, and made it clear that he did not wish for further conversation. In the afternoon, however, the heat drove him out on the platform, and he seemed glad to have some one to listen to his abuse of the scenery.

"Hills and ant-hills; scrub and stones!" he growled. "That's the country you've spent millions of pounds and thousands of lives for!"

When I returned to my seat "Dr. Von Ry" appeared to be fast asleep, and he only spoke in broken English till we closed the door at half past ten.

Then he produced a bottle like a two pound glass jam jar, with a cork fitted in it, and a very long india rubber tube running through the cork; also two packets of crystals, and a large flask of water.

"This bottle," he said, emphasizing his words with his forefinger, "will shortly contain a narcotic gas. When he has had time to go to sleep, I shall inject the gas into the ventilator. While you were talking to him, I ascertained with your stick that it runs along both compartments. The air coming in from outside will blow the gas into his."

"It will not kill him," I asked quickly?

He shrugged his shoulders.

"It will not even stupefy him for long. I shall use a little chloroform when I go in. I have a guard's key. When I have found what I want, I shall bind and gag him. The guard will find him at seven

o'clock in the morning. I get off at De Aar at midnight. I have friends there. It is all arranged."

"How about me?"

"I'm afraid you'll have to be bound and gagged too. It isn't nice, but I'm afraid it's the only way to avert suspicion. You will make out that you've been drugged, of course. Say that you half woke, and heard a noise as if wheels were whizzing round, and felt as if you had a weight on your head. When you came to, you found yourself bound and gagged. You had a headache, and a coppery taste in your mouth, and felt sick. No one will suspect you—or look for the papers in your pocket!"

"What!" I cried. "I am to keep them?—All right. What am I to do with them?"

"Take them to England, and deliver them to the person I told you of. Use the word, and he will pay you £10,000. I'll write to you about my share."

"But why not take the papers yourself?"

"For two reasons. First, I shall never return to England. I am 'dead' and intend to remain so. Secondly, I shall probably be caught and searched."

"But if they catch you, and Ossoski can prove things against you? How will you get away then?"

He laughed.

"He cannot prove anything against me up here. His witnesses are at Cape Town. Also, I've a card that he little suspects, to play. No, I can't tell you." He looked me right in the eyes. "I am running straight with you, dear boy."

"I never doubted *that*," I told him. "I'm ready."

After listening several times at Ossoski's door he pronounced him asleep. He mixed the chemicals with water, and bubbles of sweet smelling gas—something like the laughing gas of the dentist—oozed out before he fitted in the cork. Then he stood on the table, and pushed the india-rubber tube along the ventilating passage. After a few minutes he got down and went out, taking a little bag in his hand. I heard Ossoski's door slide open, and close again. Then I heard a heavy fall. The truth flashed on me in a mo-

ment. Vaughan had himself been over-powered by the gas. I rushed into the passage and tried to open Ossoski's door. Vaughan had fastened it behind him!

I stood gazing vacantly at the door for a few seconds. If I burst it open, the noise would wake everyone. If I did not, everything depended on whether Ossoski or Vaughan woke first—presumably it would be Ossoski, as he was drugged first, and more gradually. I took out my penknife and tried to cut around the edge of a panel, but the knife was too blunt, or the wood too hard. Then I fetched my walking stick, and pressed it steadily against the panel near the keyhole. After some effort I broke through without much noise. The gas rushed out and made me feel faint, but I opened the opposite window in the corridor to let it out, and tore away enough of the panel to get my hand in, and unlatch the door. Then I dragged Vaughan back to his berth and dabbed his face with a wet towel. There was water in the lavatory. In a minute or two he opened his eyes. Before I had finished telling him what I had done, he staggered to his feet.

"What a fool I was!" he said. "Stop here. Yes, yes, I'm all right."

He shut me in again. I heard him stumbling around in Ossoski's compartment, and waited in an agony of suspense for fear the conductor should come round and notice the rent in the door. To my relief, Vaughan returned very quickly. He had a small flat package of papers which he handed to me.

"Now, I must tie you up," he said. "Don't be alarmed. I give you my word it will be all right. Remember that you have been drugged. We're nearly at De Aar now. If the guard comes round I'll stand with my back against the hole in the door. That's it. Now the gag." He smiled at me and stroked my hair gently. "Good bye, dear boy, and good luck to you and your Lucy.—You'll be very happy together. Keep my half of the reward for a wedding present.—Good bye!"

He went out, leaving me stretched helplessly on the seat. Presently I heard him talking to the conductor. Then the train slowed down and stopped. I heard the

baggage being moved about, and the jabbering of Kaffirs on the platform. Trunks were taken off the train, and others put on with a bang. Then the train went on. I began to feel cramped, and horrible doubts came into my mind whether I might be undiscovered, and left there to choke or starve. Then I heard the conductor shouting in the corridor; then a rush of footsteps, and a commotion in Ossoski's compartment. In a few moments the conductor and some passengers burst in upon me.

"It's that rascally Boer," the conductor cried. "I always had my suspicions about him. He's murdered both these poor gents, and robbed them."

They untied me, sat me up, and sluiced my face with water. I pretended to come to slowly, and sat back against the corner, trying to look dazed. They stopped the train and fetched a doctor from another carriage. He brought Ossoski to, after we had been backed into De Aar. He described his symptoms as I had described mine. The only difference, the doctor said, was that he had been drugged more heavily.

Ossoski explained volubly that he believed "Dr. Von Ry" to be a man named Venning who had come out in the *Dover Castle* disguised as a woman, and was supposed to have died on board, but had probably only shammed death and escaped. He evidently had no suspicions of me. The police, however, insisted that I must stop at De Aar for the present, to help to identify the Boer, if he was caught.

An hour after breakfast they reported that they had found his clothes and his big bag in the field. Just after lunch they brought in a slight, nervous, rather pretty lady. I felt quite sure that she was Vaughan. Ossoski shook his fist at her, and swore that she was "Venning" alias "Mrs. Filmer." He sneered at me when I denied any resemblance to the latter.

"He's probably made away with the papers," Ossoski said, "but the fact that he's a man in disguise will be enough for you."

"Quite enough," said the head policeman. "I've no doubt in my own mind about it."

The conductor said that *he* had no doubt, and so said most of the passengers; but the lady, who called herself Mrs. Leicester, insisted with tearful indignation that it was all a mistake. Finally she demanded to be searched by some ladies. Four matrons who were on the train undertook the task, and she retired with them to one of the station offices. The police officer waited with great importance outside the door, and Ossoski walked up and down on the platform, twitching his skinny hands with impatience.

After about ten minutes the police officer came forward, followed by "Mrs. Leicester," looking flushed and triumphant, and by four indignant ladies.

"You'd best apologize," he advised. "There are no papers, and he—that is she—is a lady. There'll be a row about this. I had my doubts all along."

Ossoski showed his teeth and snarled like a vicious dog.

"It's a lie," he shouted. "You're all in league with her."

The four ladies bridled up with one accord.

"Perhaps you'll inform this—this man—who I am," said the one who had taken the lead.

The police officer drew Ossoski a little aside.

"She's the wife of Sir Ewan Jones," he declared in a hoarse whisper, "and two of the others are the wives of high officials. If you don't apologize there'll be trouble."

Ossoski stared at them with his lips drawn back from his large yellow teeth.

"If this is a woman," he snarled, "Venning was a woman. It's Venning. I won't apologize. They lie!"

The ladies started a shrill clamor, and the police officer began to pull Ossoski away rather roughly, but "Mrs. Leicester" interceded.

"I do not think he is responsible for his actions," she said sweetly. "What did you say his name was?—Ossoski?"

Now I remember. He's mad. His wife had to leave him. *Her* maiden name was Venning, and—"

Ossoski gave a sudden yell and sprang at her; but the police officer and I caught him.

"It is my wife!" he yelled. "My wife.—Don't let her go.—She's my wife, I tell you!"

"I told you he was quite mad," she whispered. "Hadn't I better humor him?—Yes, I'm your wife. Of course, I'm your wife, dear?"

He tried again to spring at her, but the police officer held him firmly.

"Come along with me," he said. "I'll find you a nice compartment to yourself; and someone to look after you!"

And in spite of his protests, he was forced into the train and taken to Johannesburg, leaving "Mrs. Leicester" on the platform waving her hand.

The great personage who took the papers and gave me the reward supplied what little remains of the story.

"Ossoski," he said, "had a charming English wife whom he treated badly. About three years ago she disappeared. Some people said that he had killed her; others that she had run away from his ill usage. *He* said that she was dead; but that the proofs of her death had been stolen from his rooms by one Venning, her cousin, who could not be found. Apparently she was Venning, and Venning became Vaughan, and I imagine that your father, who knew her people, befriended her.—Anyhow we shall hear no more of the Cape Conspiracy; and I doubt if you'll ever hear any more of her."

There he was wrong, as even great personages sometimes are. For a year later Ossoski died, and the Countess reappeared at my wedding to Lucy. She was an old friend of my father's, she explained, and my wife is as fond of her as I am. Her portrait stands on my desk now—a slight, beautiful woman, with wonderful eyes; and underneath is written in her hand—

"A strong friend and a strong foe, and ever your friend, PAULINE OSSOSKI."

Lucy smiles when she reads the inscription.

"It shows how people deceive themselves about themselves," she says. "She couldn't hurt a fly—our dear Pauline!"

But I have not told even Lucy the story of the Cape Conspiracy!

An Also Ran

BY MARTHA McCULLOCH WILLIAMS

"The goodness of gold is tried by fire, the goodness of women is tried by gold, and the goodness of men by women."

Whether or not this is a dark saying invariably depends. One may read into it at pleasure unwavering faith or cynic doubt; one may also see it clothed upon with stout and steadfast chivalry or subtly sinister suggestion. But Dick Bernays had never heard it—even if he had, the chances are it would have gone over his head; notwithstanding he was to prove one meaning of it in most convincing fashion, under stress of things felt but never defined.

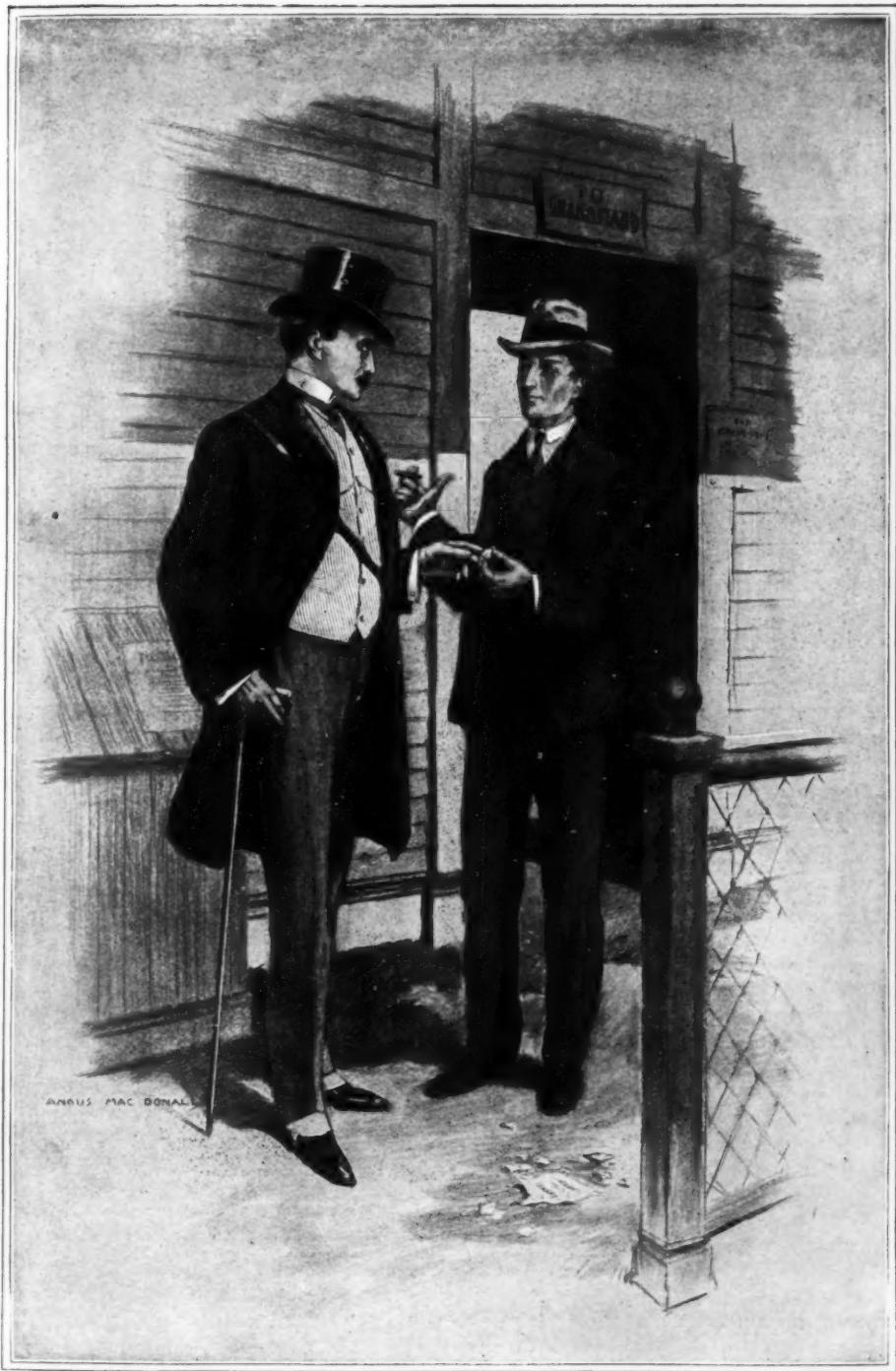
Dick had not always been a bad lot. As late as five years back he had had the right to hold up his head with the best of his county. How he lost it need not be here categorically set forth; as the son of a dead man, the sole grandson of his county's benefactor, his wrong-doing was hushed up, on condition of perpetual exile. The man who banished him had possibly a deeper reason than regard for the community's moral tone. Dick, in the flush of early manhood, was singularly handsome, still more singularly winning. His judge, who was also his accuser, had one fair daughter, with whom the scapegrace had been in love ever since she left off short frocks. Thus far simply eye-love; Dick had been too conscious of his own unworthiness to speak out. All the same, Adam Grant knew how the land lay, and was resolved to take no chances, even the remotest, touching his Elspeth's future welfare.

Dick had played the ponies to his own undoing. Outcast, with a bare hundred dollars in his pocket, he inevitably gravitated to the race track. He loved horses, and knew them by heart; the knowledge indeed was, after a sort, in his blood. But his passion was gambling; beside the electric thrills of winning or losing, everything else was of small account. What wonder that in three days he had not a cent, or that in the shuddering weeks that followed he was almost suffi-

ciently punished for his transgressions? He was so new, so raw, still so hampered by his gentleman's upbringing that he found the gay life, so called, very far from a primrose path. Notwithstanding, he did not whine; along with his weaknesses, his vices, he had the scant virtue of being game. So he held his place among the sports by sheer courage, in the face of insult, oppression, often of desperate hunger, until a piece of pure luck set him, in a way, on his feet.

That is to say, after an odd fashion, he obliged Haughton—Haughton, whose word could make or break almost any man on the turf. He had, deservedly, the name of being hard, yet could be grateful—on occasion. Dick gave back to him, with a look that forbade mention of reward, a lost trinket, a gem-set locket, which held a picture of Haughton's only child, dead these fifteen years. Haughton was on bad terms with his wife—they had separated just after the baby's funeral. Thus it happened he had no other picture; naturally he treasured the locket, and found himself well disposed towards the tall, dark-eyed, hollow-cheeked youngster who had returned it, saying in his soft, slurring southern voice: "Excuse me, Mist' Haughton—but here's somethin' you lost, down in front of the Alanack stable. I noticed it hangin' on your watch chain yesterday—that's how I know whom it belongs to."

Haughton had answered in kind—as one gentleman to another. Dick was still so ingenuous, in three minutes Haughton had guessed his whole story. He felt in honor bound to do something for the fellow; for a minute he thought of making a place for him among his stable employes, but decided that it would be better to give him a sure tip, and where-withal to play it. "Put that on Briarthorpe in the last race," he had said, crowding some yellow-backed bills into Dick's hand. Then, as Dick got red and white and tried to stammer something of protest, he had added: "What's a thou-



DRAWN BY ANGUS MAC DONALD

"Excuse me, but here is somethin' you lost down in front of the stable."

sand dollars between honest men? Give it back when it suits you—but not until then."

Fancy Dick's frame of mind when Briarthorpe, the good thing, at twenty to one, went through with bells on. He repaid Haughton first thing after cashing in, then spent five minutes in deciding whether he would turn bookmaker, or stable-owner, or remain as he was, a free lance of fortune. The stable won out—next day he bought a good colt, and next week, his luck continuing, a fairish filly, and a couple of platters. This story's beginning found him still a stable owner, albeit he had had dizzying ups and downs. But he had never quite gone under—possibly because Haughton had stood his friend, in a careless, half-distant fashion. Dick had never tried to make either merchandise or capital of the friendship. Haughton was what the newspapers call a magnate. He was no less powerful in the street than on the turf. Moreover, he was understood, darkly to be sure, to have power with the constituted authorities—rather more than they had over themselves. Living thus, as it were, under the limelight, he had to be cautious; otherwise things done most privily would have been published from the housetops. Notwithstanding his estate of semi-detachedness, he had so far kept himself impeccable—at least on the surface. There was, of course, the inevitable establishment, somewhere in the background; but whatever he did that way was kept so well under the rose that the astutest gossip, the most prying social detective, had not found it out.

"The squarest owner that ever paid entrance money"—that was his reputation among turfmen of all degrees. His stable, the Glentyre, one of the biggest and best equipped, was supplemented by a blue-grass breeding farm from which came yearly a crop of youngsters royally bred. The pick of them went into training; the others were either sold at nominal prices or given outright to the two or three small stable owners Haughton specially favored. He would not sell a hoof to any of his rival millionaires, nor forgive one of his bene-

ficiaries who let himself be tempted into doing it. "Remember there's always room in the Glentyre for whatever shows class," he said to them. Moreover, he never haggled as to price, nor balked at raising another rich man's figures. Thus it happened sometimes that his leavings turned out better than his havings. It was worth any poor turfman's while to tend, pamper and wait upon a colt until it found itself, secure that if the self proved worth finding, the animal would bring him a small fortune.

Haughton virtually owned two metropolitan tracks, but at Green Park he was something of an outsider. Still his horses ran there regularly, the club house and paddock received him with open arms, and the betting ring thrilled to welcome him. To be strictly accurate, it thrilled in welcome to his money—he laid no wagers himself, although he had no regular commissioner. The lack was a piece of his squeamishness; he said if the public knew his play, it might be tempted to back it, and that he did not care to have upon his conscience. The Glentyre stable was an inheritance; his father had been a famous racing man. In the fifty odd years of its existence no breath of scandal, no hint of crookedness had ever attached to it. Dark horses, dark secrets were alike unknown in its history. The few Glentyre entries that had won at long odds had come home practically un-backed, astonishing their owners as much as anybody.

Dick's luck had about frayed itself out. He had had hard lines pretty well all year. Though he had still a string of horses a dozen strong, they had not won him their feed bills, so far, much less stable expenses. Then, too, his three months' devotion to Trixy of the chorus had put a bad crimp in his bank roll. She was so soft, so pretty, so youthfully avaricious, so avid of delight, spelled for her by glitter and finery, he could deny her few things on which she set her heart. He had no illusions about her; when he came to the end of his tether—if come he must—she would hardly trouble herself to smile him "good-bye" as she went with a luckier man. Until that happened she was a

distraction worth while—one he had no mind to forego, so long as his money lasted.

He was not seriously disquieted over his prospects; luck might change any day. Green Park's summer meeting began in two days more; if he could win the Fairweather, or even be "in the money," he should be on velvet for at least six months. Unless he did win, he could pretty well see his finish; tips on sure things even would not avail to save him. He had not money to play them at a saving rate; Haughton might possibly help him that way, but he was not the sort to ask such help. He had just got his string fairly stabled at the Park, and sent his Fairweather candidate out for exercise, when he saw Haughton, driving through the gates, sitting very straight, his mouth hard, his brows scowling.

Dick almost whistled. Something very much out of the common had brought the rich turfman. What could it be? He had the most unwavering faith in his trainer, old Ben Joyce—it could not be he had come to make sure his three Fairweather candidates were properly on edge. One of them, Flaxen, in virtue of past performances, was already the even money favorite. He had indeed proved himself, far and away, the best of the year, smothering or spread-eagling his fields according to class every time he had started. Spite of the penalties thus piled up, the betting folk who had won on him all the way could see nothing else in the Fairweather. They would go to him; indeed, they had already gone, many of them—hook, line, and sinker. Dick smiled a bit grimly as he thought of it; his candidate was Glentyre bred, a blood brother to the favorite. Haughton had known that in giving the colt away he was parting with a race horse, but the yearling's coat had displeased him; its ground color was red-sorrel, like burnished copper in sun or shade, but it was clownishly blotched and splotched with white. His racing colors should not be carried by a calico horse, even though they might possibly be carried to victory. The favorite was red-sorrel all over, with mane and tail the color of fine flax—whence his name.

A trace of sentiment had made Dick christen the gift colt Outcast. "We two outcasts ought to bring each other great luck," he said, pulling the big fellow's ear. Outcast indeed was so lusty big he was almost ungainly, and stood an inch higher at the whirlbone than the tail, albeit his forepiece was none so light. There was no beauty in the conformation, but Dick chuckled to see it. Had not the great Eclipse, who "won the race, with the rest nowhere," been of that same build? Outcast would not fully come to himself under four years old; still, with a field of twenty-five, there was no knowing what might not happen. The colt had been out but twice, and then so much on the big side he had not showed any approach to his true form. Let him run the least bit impressively in the Fairweather, and Haughton would be after him—his spots to the contrary notwithstanding.

The Fairweather was the richest, the most classic of two year-old stake events. The greater part of the king-pins among the entries had been worked, or exercised, a little after daylight, and were now snug in stall. Still the track was full of horses, walking, cantering, galloping, some hooded and in blankets, others stripped. Outcast was of the blanketed division. Dick, watching him narrowly, saw that he ran under wraps and fought for his head. That astonished him somewhat; theretofore the colt had been as good-natured and tractable in his work as a big, lumbering puppy. Dick wished he had got to the course earlier; he wanted especially to see Tranter in action—Tranter, the western crack who was a sort of hoodoo to the bookmakers. Since New Year he had run upon pretty well every track between Chicago and New Orleans, and whether more money had been won or lost over him nobody could say. One thing was certain—he had lost by a whisker time after time, when by all rights he should have won. He had likewise come home on the bit, with so much against him in the way of weight and track, the ring had been tempted into laying ridiculous odds. So the knights of the stool grumbled and swore, when they found out that Tranter's

owner meant to have a shy at the Fairweather. "That fellow Gore had better stay at home," they said, "than butt into a fixture already sufficiently puzzling."

As Outcast rounded the turn a buzz ran along the line of rail birds at watch. Dick turned his head a little and saw a colt as big as Outcast, running so low, so swiftly, he was like a stealing black shadow. Dick's eye was keen and quick, yet it did no more than note the strange colt's mighty reach, the white star in his forehead, the black midget, crouched over his withers, clinging motionless to the reins, before he was around the turn, streaming through the outreach to be swallowed up there in the moving mass. When he came again he had gained a hundred yards on Outcast, and though he was lathered from counter to tail, ran, hard held, stronger, faster than before.

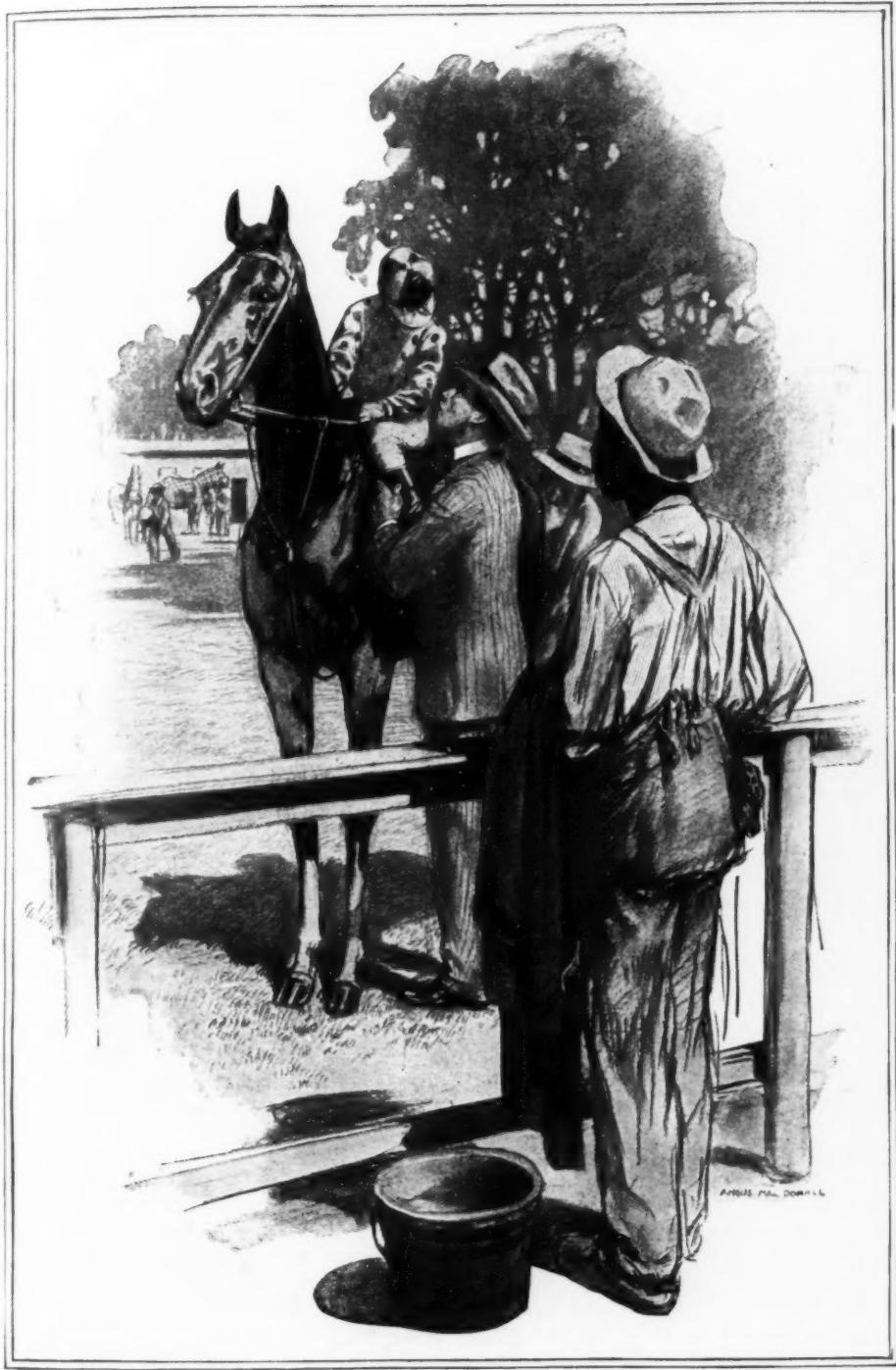
"Can we beat him?—Tranter, you know?" Haughton asked, very low, in a hard strained voice. He was at Dick's elbow, staring down the track, scowling more than ever. "If you will drive back to town with me, Bernays," he went on, "I may be able to put you in the way of something—something rather well worth while."

Dick went, of course. He got back to the Park at a late hour, and in a very bad humor. Openly he swore and scowled at everything; secretly he scourged himself, as a coward and thief—or worse. It was odd, but he had standards, in spite of all that had happened. It hurt to go away from them—even for a great price, and the obliging of a friend. He did not want to disoblige Haughton, any more than he could afford to do it, but he would cheerfully have foregone his prospective profit to have had back his old belief in the man. He had held Haughton high, and careless, hard with the incrustings of prosperity, but square withal—wholly above trickery. What had tempted him to be otherwise? Not the stake, certainly; what sense was there in spending a hundred thousand to win fifty—to say nothing of risking a good name? The prestige of winning was likewise out of the question; the Glentyre stable had already half a dozen Fairweathers to its

credit. Nor could it be rivalry; although there were other owners Haughton held it a duty to hate and outwit. They had sure starters, but not one that had a chance against Flaxen—against the least of the Glentyre entries. Yet it was more than impossible it could be the books—still there was nothing else, unless—

Speculation stopped short there. Even mentally Dick would not say, "unless it is a woman." Whether or not Haughton was what he seemed morally, in no way concerned Dick Bernays. It did concern him vitally that Dick Bernays should not needlessly smirch womenkind in his thought. He had kept, you see, the curious soft-hearted chivalry bred in him by the women of his mother's sort, and the girls of Elspeth's pattern. He thought of them now hazily, as once he had thought of the shining white angels, wondering no little what he should do if Fate or Chance should set him face to face with one of them.

He was to find out upon Fairweather day. The course filled early. Before the first race was called there was hardly room to move in the stand or on the big lawn before it. The club-house mass was not quite so dense. Dick, at the rail in front of it, saw Haughton on the piazza laughing and talking with some people, but with still that scowl at the edge of his brow. To escape the sight, he went back to the stables. There he let himself into Outcast's stall, sent the watchful groom out a minute, then hugged the colt tight, and whispered in his alert ear: "Old boy, I wish I was a better man or a worse one—then this thing wouldn't hurt so like hell." But when Hank Hart, the trainer, came in to prepare the colt for his preliminary, he found Dick swearing at the beast for a lazy lubber, good for nothing in the world but to destroy hay and oats, and burn up entrance money. "Now you quit. We got things enough agin us, without you a-rilin' up the caliker hoss," the gruff fellow said, taking Dick by the shoulders. "You g'wan up to the stand—that's another bunch o' caliker, and a wuss one, a-waitin' fer you thar. I seen her meself little while back. G'wan, I tell ye—and stay thar. A



DRAWN BY ANGUS MAC DONALL

"Dick drew Tygert down and whispered something." See page 603

cross owner is the shorest bait fer bad luck."

Dick went, chewing a straw, but not to the stand. He knew Trixy was there, but somehow did not care to see her. So he hung over the rail watching the warming-up gallops, comparing, calculating chances with the utmost nicety, in the forepart of his head, while back of it all ran a blurred yet burning consciousness that he was seeing the course for the last time. He would be ruled off, of course —nothing could save him. He thought of the bluff, gruff trainer with a sigh. Poor old Hank! It might be the ruin of him; if it was, Haughton must—he stopped with a start, fearing he had spoken aloud. But the men beside him had evidently heard nothing. They were deep in track gossip—involuntarily Dick began to listen. For the gossip was all of Tranter and his owner—how Gore had bet thousands—thousands he did not possess—upon his horse's chance —how it was said, at the very last minute he would bet still more. Then others chimed in with muttered stories of the foolish fellow—he was trying to make himself to save breaking—it had been a hard pull for him to fetch his stock east, to say nothing of keeping up entrances and forfeits. But he put up a *front*—on that all agreed—did Gore, owner of Tranter and the Flitaway stable. He had run off with a rich man's daughter, in hope of mending his fortunes. It hadn't worked—not a bit; contrariwise, he had got a hard bargain. Mrs. Gore wanted to spend money with both hands. Quarrels! Well—what else? Mrs. Gore *would* dress like a queen—even of the Tenderloin. The black stable hands said so—and they got it straight from Mrs. Gore's maid, the head rubber's sweetheart.

Dick listened, gripping the rail hard, but saying hardly a word. As he saw Outcast go back to stall, he strolled on to the paddock. It was only a little while before the saddling bell would ring—he hated to go there, but Haughton had said imperatively: "All must be as usual as we can make it." So he went slouching in, his eyes on the ground, and almost ran into a group under the

shadiest of the trees before he saw it. As he drew back murmuring apology, a woman's voice, soft, clear, sweetly slurring, the voice of the South, cried: "Dick! Dick Bernays! It is you? To think of your runnin' over me this way! Why, do you know?" to her companions, "Dick was my first sweetheart. Ain't you ashamed of yourself, sir—runnin' off as you did and leavin' me? I might have died of a broken heart—if 'Cell had not providentially come along."

This with both hands outstretched, laughing, dimpling, sparkling-eyed. Dick fell back aghast. It was Elspeth, yet not herself. The girl of his love had been like a lily—the woman who looked out of her eyes, spoke with her voice, was a rich and radiant rose. In a flash there came back to him the Grant family history; Adam Grant had been austere indeed, but his father had wasted a fortune in riotous good living. Elspeth, no doubt, threw back to the rioter; she had, besides, to make up to herself for the strait years of church-going and mortification of the flesh. Else why was she now so flattery fine, with rings on all her fingers, jewels sparkling on her breast? He took her outstretched hands, stammering and flushing so she laughed outright, saying after she had presented him to the man beside her: "Mr. Watson—I wouldn't have believed it without seein' it—but Dick is ashamed to meet his old friends here in New York—he knows we are such country tackies. But he needn't be. Indeed, I don't believe he will—when he knows. He don't dream who I am—Mrs. Gore, joint owner of the Flitaway stable—nor that we Gores have got a friend at court—one mighty well worth havin'. We met him at Churchill Downs—he stopped over two days for the spring meetin'. I wasn't sure he'd even remember us—yet here he is treatin' us like kin-folks—you'd think we were his dearest, doublest cousins—"

"What's his name?" Dick interrupted, smiling down at her, keeping fast hold of her hands. He knew he ought not to do it—instead he ought to go straight away. Something held him, in spite of himself—something more compelling than even Elspeth's charm.

Dimpling more than ever, her eyes fairly dancing, she said demurely: "Don't faint—an affidavit goes w th it, if necessary—but we've really, truly, been hobnobbin' with—the great Mr. Haughton."

"Haughton!"

That was all Dick said—he could say nothing more—he was so blinded by a great light, so weighed down by a greater darkness. He had found the key to the riddle. Elspeth, Elspeth's honor, happiness, and future, were the real stake in the Fairweather—which Haughton meant to win at any cost. She had bewitched him, no doubt, past all reason and prudence. No doubt also he knew her husband's desperate case, and was bound to make it worse than hopeless. It must be also he had seen deep into the girl's heart—she was so young, so open, so clear-eyed, there was nothing to baffle him. Plainly she craved beauty, luxury, all the good gifts of great riches. In a month Haughton would be showering them upon her—unless—

Dick got no farther—the saddling bell came to his rescue. With a murmured apology to Elspeth he slid back to the paddock gate, whence, a little later, he advanced leading Outcast. The other candidates came crowding in, all save the Glentyre entries, which would be saddled in their own stable. Tygert, Outcast's rider, brave in the Bernays white with cherry spots, walked behind the colt, his eyes going restlessly from side to side. Outcast's rubber came, too—a laughing black boy, w th big eyes and shiny white teeth. Other young things had even bigger retinues, yet it was not stable folk that crowded the paddock till there was not free elbow room. All sorts and conditions of men, women rouged and richly gowned, flower-faced girls, horsey ones, simply pretty ones who like to seem "in the know," huddled around each prospective starter, jostling, pushing, craning necks to see, button-holing all who might by chance know a stable secret, or straining ears to catch some fragment of the orders to the jockeys.

Outcast stood ready for the call to post, statue-still, his nose in the hollow of Dick's arm. Tygert, a little way off, kept his eyes on the ground, while Hank

Hart said things that apparently went over his head. Tygert knew what he was to do—and what was likely to come of it. Therefore he grinned sardonically when Trixy burst through the ring and rushed at Outcast, crying shrilly as she tried to hug him: "Oh, you big darling! I know you're going to bring me home a pearl necklace and a diamond star! Isn't he, honey?" with a languishing glance at Dick. Dick scowled, but answered briefly: "No. Get your whole bundle down on somethin' else, Trix. Them pirates in the ring will likely not give you as good as evens on this lubber to show—and that's the most I hope for—"

"You know my money's down—else you wouldn't be saying that," Trixy retorted, speaking very loud. They were not far off the club-house piazza, where there were eyes she had a mind to draw to herself. Dick turned from her wearily, saying almost shortly: "That's all right—anything's all right so long as you didn't back Tranter. Now you trot along — they'll call us to post in a minute."

Luck was with the starter that day. He got the unwieldy field away like a file of cavalry at the third line-up. Dick held Outcast's bridle until the last second, but nobody wondered—not any more than they wondered when he drew Tygert's ear down to his lips, and whispered something—something that made the boy hold up his head like one suddenly reprieved. Tranter had drawn the outside, Flaxen the rail, but that meant nothing — the Fairweather seven furlongs was run straightforward. Outcast stood third from Tranter—so far Fate had favored Dick in the thing set him to do. He had been white and stern-faced as he came to the post; he was stern-faced still, but after the whisper at Tygert, his cheeks got their usual wholesome color.

As the young things broke to a roaring, "They're off!" Elspeth clutched Haughton's arm, saying breathlessly: "O-oh! It's delicious—being just a little more than a minute from—a fortune. Don't laugh at me—a Fairweather means nothing to you. Fifty thousand dollars!

But me! I can hardly believe there is so much money anywhere."

Haughton did not answer—his eyes were glued to a glass. Elspeth lifted hers, so she also might see that far-away, plunging, many-colored line, break, dissolve, change, like the figures in a kaleidoscope. It had bays, grays, chestnuts, washy light sorrels in multiple, but only one black—Tranter r. It was easy to single him out, even if his colors had not been the most glaring orange. For a furlong he ran at the head of the ruck, but Elspeth was not dismayed—she knew his jockey had orders to ride a waiting race. They had been given over her protest. "He can go to the front and stay there—why not let him?" she had asked with just the touch of angry scorn to make Gore more than ever set upon having his own way. He had chuckled, thinking how, after the race, he would say with his big air: "Oh, we just played with you New York fellows a bit—enough to make you feel good—knowin' it was our Fairweather all the way." Gore was not an engaging person at close quarters—Elspeth was finding out the fact more and more each day. She had married him under glamour—he was so unlike anything she had known. Still she was not wholly out of love with him—she could not be, when she recalled that he had taken her away from the primness, the grimness, the narrow, dull, aristocratic conservatism of life in her native town.

As the race swept down upon the half mile pole she felt Haughton tremble. Flaxen led everything by two open lengths, as he had done from the first jump, but in the wink of an eyelash Tranter shot forward and lapped him half-way. Outcast ran right at Tranter's heels; in another wink he was between the black colt and the gleaming red fellow, the three running hardly heads apart. Elspeth got white and breathless. "Now, Tranter! Now! Run! For me!" she panted, her voice full of tears. Haughton caught his breath as he heard it—he could not look at her—at anything but the course. His heart stood still a beat, then hammered fiercely. What was Tygert thinking of? Had Bernays

dared to play him false? Death white, grim, with furrowed brow, he looked, looked, hoping to see Outcast foul and cripple the flying black. That was what he had plotted—what Dick had sworn should come to pass. If it did not come to pass—again his heart stood still a beat, but less for the fearful risk taken in vain than for what the vanity might imply.

He had planned thus, plotted thus, because he coveted another man's wife. Elspeth had truly bewitched him—who had thought himself proof against anything in woman-shape these years and years. He had appraised her lawful lord rightly, and gauged easily the gulf ready to open between them. Gore had bet so recklessly, if he lost the Fairweather he would be down and out for good. Then it would be easy for a sympathizing friend to come to Elspeth's help—there might even be divorces—but Haughton's infatuation had been too deep, too powerful, for long and patient calculation. The thing in hand had been to ruin Gore—and he had not shrunk from undertaking it. Elspeth! Elspeth! The consciousness of her, her nearness, her dearness, surged and beat through him, while with dry, staring eyes he watched the battle on the course.

Gore stood to win a fortune over his colt. God! how the black demon ran!—going down, down, down, coming up, up, up, stretching, gathering, stretching again, with the supple quickness of a greyhound. Still the race was not won, nor lost; Flaxen's rider, Lamson, had gone to the whip; under punishment for the first time in his victorious career, the red sorrel showed himself game as any pebble. He came again like a good fellow; his head was in front, his neck, his whole fore-piece; but do what he might, that black bulldog would not be out-gamed. Tygert was right at the black's quarter—why did he hang there?—if he would but bear out, all might be well without an open foul.

Presently the three ran even, rather like one beast of many legs than a trio. Side by side, neck and neck, stride for stride, they fought through the stretch, with eyeballs bursting, hearts laboring,



DRAWN BY ANGUS MAC DONALD

"Haughton did not answer—his eyes were glued to a glass."

answering gallantly the swishing catgut, the cruel proddings of cold steel. Nobody watching them had eyes, or thought, for the ruck until a lean, lank chestnut came from the front of it, in three bounds locked the leaders, ran over them, nipped them on the post, and got the verdict by a head, while the crowd set up a droning, groaning cheer. It died to explosive silence—if silence can be explosive. The lean chestnut, Nearwind by name, had indubitably won, but the sharpest eye, in the judges' stand or out of it, could not separate the three place horses by even an eyelash.

"How did they settle it? Don't I get my money?" Trixy wailed to Dick when he went to her an hour later. Dick was no longer scowling, although he looked thoughtful.

"It's 'good-bye,' Trix," he said, but not uncheerfully. "I'm goin' to cut all this. The settlement? Oh! that was fair enough—the books are payin' place and show bets on Flaxen and Tranter—Haughton bought Outcast at a decent price, so I don't mind their makin' him an also ran."

"But I do!" Trixy's wail was louder than ever.

Dick turned from her to face the clubhouse with a faint smile and a far-away look in his eyes. Elspeth was on the veranda—Elspeth whom he had saved. She was so happy she was almost tearful, although she chattered brightly with the Watsons, as she hung upon Gore's arm. Dick had talked with Haughton on the lawn below her. He had not, of course, named her—that would have been inexcusable. Neither had he threatened—that would have been more inexcusable still. But he knew he had made Haughton understand, although he had said no more than: "Right here we both quit—playin' games. Understand, Mr. Haughton, I ain't judgin' *you* nor any way settin' myself up for a moral pattern, but this ain't the first time I've been an also ran by the count rather'n the course, I come from down South—same as—somebody else—and no Southern girl is comin' to harm if I can help it."

Haughton had answered only with a silent, scowling sneer, but he, too, had looked up at Elspeth in a way to show Dick his words had not been spoken in vain.



The Peacemakers

BY PORTER EMERSON BROWNE

Vivian and I sat on a most uncomfortable rustic bench near the first tee. Vivian was gazing at the red coated figures that dotted the green links before us and I was gazing at Vivian. The beauties of Nature are all well enough; but Nature doesn't have a dimple in her cheek, nor thick, glorious hair, just wilful enough to be fascinating, nor dark eyes that fill one with a desire to get down upon one's knees and make oneself generally ridiculous.

"Kathryn Kent and Bob Raymond have quarreled again," said Vivian, at length. "I saw Kathryn yesterday and she told me so—said that she would never speak to him again."

"Eight girls have told me that," I volunteered. "Never isn't such a long while, though, as the dictionary would have us think."

"Eight?" queried Vivian.

"It may be nine," I replied. "It's so difficult to keep count of such things, you know."

Vivian raised delightful questioning eyebrows.

"Or it may have been only one," I went on. "I remember once, when you and I—"

"I forget such things," interrupted Vivian, calmly.

"I don't," I said simply. And I don't.

She sat for a moment deep in thought, her eyes upon the green sward before her. I don't need to tell you where my eyes were.

"Someone should impress upon Bob what a fine girl Kathryn is and upon Kathryn what a nice boy Bob is," she said, "so that they will realize what sillies they are making of themselves."

"Yes," I agreed, "someone should. But I should prefer that it were someone else."

Vivian looked at me with disapproval. "When I was built," I said apologetically, "the model upon which saints and martyrs are made, was being used by someone else, I'm afraid."

"So am I," said Vivian, calmly. There was a pause.

"And now Bob is going with Gladys Vandever," Vivian continued, "and —"

"Shows remarkably good taste," I interjected, taking a fearful chance.

But Vivian is almost always just, and so she said, "Yes, she is attractive, but she is not so well suited to Bob as Kathryn is. And Kathryn is a good deal with that Corny Davenport, who drinks and plays poker."

"He plays very well," I said, humbly. I ought to know. It was knowledge that had been expensive to acquire.

"Well?" queried Vivian.

"Well what?" I asked.

"Will you help me?" she asked. "You did before, you know."

"Yes, I know," I replied. "That's the trouble."

Vivian turned toward me and her eyes rested for a moment in mine.

"Court," she said, softly, "do you know, sometimes I like you very much."

I was just beginning to get unduly elated when she turned away, and finished, "And sometimes I don't," and I sank back against a couple of rustic knobs that made dents in me; and I was glad of it.

Then Vivian leaned toward me. "You say," she remarked, "that you want—" she hesitated.

"You," I finished for her.

"Yes," she said, and then she sighed. "It's awful!"

"What's awful?" I asked.

"Why, to think, if you won't do a little thing like this for me before, what you'd be after."

And what could I do?

"Well, what's the plan of the campaign?" I asked.

"Why," said Vivian, "you must see Bob and praise Kathryn to him; while I will laud Bob to the skies when I am with Kathryn."

"That wasn't the plan you had before," I objected. "Then you were going

to make two people want one another because they ought not to."

"And was that plan a success?"

"Not unqualifiedly," I admitted.

"All the more reason, then, why we should use different means now," stated Vivian, logically.

I must confess that I didn't like the idea. It is bad business, this mixing up in other people's affairs and I have a sufficiency of troubles of my own, as you doubtless can see. But I have yet to see the man who wouldn't play horse when Vivian wanted to drive.

I met Raymond that evening. He was seated alone on the veranda, and the occasion looked auspicious. So I settled down beside him and lighted a cigarette.

"I was at the Country Club this afternoon," I said.

"Um," said Raymond, making a pass with his stick at an unduly familiar June bug.

"Saw Kathryn out there," I ventured further.

"Um," said Raymond again.

"Charming girl," I persisted.

"Um," said Raymond yet again. He did not seem over responsive to my treatment.

"Very charming girl," I amplified, idiotically. "Very, very charming girl." This was neither particularly bright nor original, but it was the best that I could do extemporaneously and with such an unappreciative audience.

I saw that I must be more emphatic. "She'd make a very fine wife for some man—for some lucky man," I said, soulfully and impressively.

But he only said "Um" again, and lighted another cigarette.

"She'd make a very, very fine wife indeed," I repeated, "for some man like—ch—like me, or you." This seemed to me to be a very subtle touch. So I repeated, "for me, or you."

"Why don't you marry her then and stop singing about it?" queried Raymond. Raymond is very obtuse sometimes.

I thought a moment. "A little jealousy," I said to myself, "may do the trick. I'll pretend that I'm in love with

her myself. That will show him that he's got no walkover, anyway." So I turned to Raymond.

"Well," I said, "I might, at that." I fell into the part very easily now. "I've been thinking for some time of settling down, and, with a wife like Kathryn, pretty, talented, attractive and good, it seems to me that a fellow might be mighty happy."

"Um," said Raymond again.

"I have probably sown the seed of jealousy," I thought. And so, with a "good night, old man," I left him with another cigarette.

When I arose next morning it was somewhat late, and, on coming down stairs, they told me that all, with the exception of Kathryn and myself, had gone to the links. So Kathryn and I got aboard Berton's red touring car and rode out together. When we arrived at the club, the keeper told us that the rest were on the links, so we took our clubs and started a round together.

Down by the seventh hole a brook cuts the edge of the green, and there a thick clump of bushes and several trees form a very bad hazard. The hole lies just on the other side, hidden by an underbrush and you have to play a mashie, all at guesswork, you know, while standing on the steep bank.

Kathryn got a bad lie, right in among the bushes, where the bank was steepest. I handed her her club and stood near her while she played the stroke, for I feared that she might slip. And she did. I caught her about the waist as her feet slid from under her, and then I slipped, too, and we both sat down very suddenly and not too comfortably on the ground.

When one sits down like that, it disconcerts one, and, for a moment, we remained as we were, seated side by side on the grass with my arm about Kathryn's waist, for I had secured a good hold as we slipped. And just then I heard a laugh, and, looking up, saw Vivian Van Zandt and Bob Raymond and Tom and Beatrice Berton and Evelyn and Arthur Kingsley-Gordon and Gladys Vandever and Corny Davenport all looking down at us through the shrubbery, and all laughing; all, that is, with the exception of Vivian and

Davenport. She looked cross and he was scowling ferociously.

I scrambled to my feet and helped Kathryn to hers.

"Charming picture," said Tom Berton, grinning.

"Looks like one of Gibson's—'The Last Day of Summer'" chuckled Raymond.

I glowered at them. I never cared much for those two fellows anyway, and now I would have rejoiced to punch their heads.

"Oh, Kathryn, dear," cried Evelyn Kingsley-Gordon, "why didn't you tell us? When is it to be? You must let us know in plenty of time for I shall surely send to Paris for a gown."

Kathryn was meanwhile blushing as red as Berton's auto and was absolutely speechless with confusion. I was mad clear through. It was evident that these people had not seen us slip, but had arrived only in time to see us sitting side by side on the bank, behind the bushes. And they were so enamored of their own



DRAWN BY EMILE NELSON

"Vivian and I sat on a most uncomfortable rustic bench."

wit that they wouldn't give me a chance to explain!

I tried again. "If you folks will quit making such blessed idiots of yourselves and listen," I began, but Berton interrupted me:

"Don't apologize, old man. It's all right. We won't tell."

"Tell what?" I shouted.

"The truth," answered Berton, still chuckling idiotically.

"But there isn't anything to tell," I yelled.

"Well, judging by appearances, there soon will be," rejoined Raymond. "We can wait."

"There's nothing to tell, and will be nothing to tell except that you are a pack of lunatics," I cried in exasperation.

"He said to me last night that he thought that Kathryn would make a very, very fine wife!" roared Raymond.

"I said that only because—" I began hotly; and then I chanced to look at Kathryn. She was trying bravely to look cool and self-possessed, but her lips were quivering and the tears were not far away. So I shut my mouth abruptly, and, turning to her, said, "Come, Kathryn," and together we went back to the club-house.

After we had entered the car, the tears came in a veritable cloudburst. She cried all the way home, and I felt like an awful brute and apologized for slipping, and for being near her when she slipped, and having allowed the hill to be on the links, and for all manner of things that I had done, and hadn't done and never could have done. And, after the first spasm of weeping was over, she grew confidential and told me that she never cared a bit for Raymond, and that he never cared a bit for her; but that she loved Corny Davenport, and was so afraid that he didn't care for her at all. Corny isn't a bad fellow at all, you know, even if he does play poker; and the Lord knows that there were few of us who were entitled to cast any first stones on that account!

Kathryn wanted to go back to the city immediately. Said she couldn't bear to stay at the house party after what had happened. But I exerted a whole lot of

persuasive powers that I didn't know I had, and finally, after I had taken the somewhat doubtful contract of seeing that everything was all right, and had made a great many comprehensive and seemingly impossible promises, she agreed to remain until the next day. But she wouldn't come down to dinner, and I must see her the first thing in the morning and tell her how things were, and, if they weren't all right, she would go back to the city without seeing *anyone*. Notwithstanding the somewhat unflattering inference to be drawn from the "*anyone*," I accepted these terms.

When the rest had returned from the club, I had cooled down, and, without heeding the jollying that they continued to heap upon my thick head, I called Davenport to one side and told him that I wanted to speak to him. From the fact that he had worn the expression of a Barbary pirate while the rest had laughed, I had deduced a theory. And the unsociable, not to say stuffy, way in which he met my request for an interview, led me to believe that there was a way, and a most satisfactory way, too, out of the mess.

At first Davenport looked as though he were going to refuse to have anything to do with me; but then he apparently thought better of it and we went out on the veranda together. I offered him a cigarette. He refused it; so I took it myself. I asked him to sit down. Again he refused. So I sat down myself, satisfied that my premises were correct.

"Davenport," I said, "I want to ask you a question."

"Well," he said.

I blew a ring of smoke at a firefly that was apparently hunting for something in the vines, and jumped right to the point.

"Do you love Kathryn Kent?"

"You've got your nerve with you," growled Davenport. "What business is that of yours?"

"A whole lot," I returned. "This afternoon, Kathryn Kent and I were so unfortunate as to slip down near the seventh hole. And a whole lot of chicken-headed fools who happened to be hanging around where they weren't wanted, immediately misconstrued the whole affair, and then had to be so bright and spark-



DRAWN BY EMILE NELSON

"All looking down at us through the shrubbery, and all laughing."



DRAWN BY EMILE NELSON

"So I sat down on the hearth-rug, and then she looked at me."

ling that they wouldn't listen to explanations."

"But you told Raymond that Kathryn would make a very fine wife," Davenport objected, unconvinced.

"So she will," I agreed.

He looked at me suspiciously.

"For you," I added.

He jumped.

"Is a word to the wise sufficient?" I asked.

It was, for, before I had fairly got the words out of my mouth, I heard him going up the stairs three at a jump. And then there was a knocking on Kathryn's door and I heard him softly calling her

name; and he put a "dear" on the end. And when you hear a "dear" you can be sure that there is a ceremony near; either that it is about to come or has just gone by. And in this case it hadn't yet come.

Having this off my mind, I suddenly remembered that Vivian, as well as Davenport, had seemed disturbed at that which had caused the others so much infantile enjoyment. Happy thought. What's sauce for the gander should be sauce for the goose (though far be it from me to call Vivian a goose), and if jealousy had been the cause of Davenport's megrims, what could have caused Vivian's, unless—?

I found her in the billiard room, alone. There was a fire on the hearth, for the evening was cool, and she had drawn a tiny chair up before it and sat there, her chin resting in the palm of one little hand while an unmistakable frown traced delicate lines upon her white forehead.

When I saw the frown, I was highly elated. In fact, so great was my enjoyment that I think I chuckled. I must have, for she looked slowly toward where I stood.

"Oh, it's you, is it?" she said, and turned again to her contemplation of the glowing coals.

"Yes," I replied. "It's I."

"I thought so," said Vivian.

I said nothing. Her remark seemed to demand no answer.

"You have much more talent than I gave you credit for," said Vivian at length, without taking her gaze from the fire. "You threw yourself into the part with much more fervor than I should have expected. You should go on the stage."

"I did once," I replied. "But I had to get off when it got to Washington Square."

"As a joke, if it is so intended," said Vivian, "that's very bad."

"I know it," I replied, resignedly. "But you can't expect to do all things well."

"What do you mean?" she asked.

"I think that we'd best go into the drawing room, where the others are," I said with apparent irrelevance. "Davenport has something to say that won't keep until morning."

"If it won't keep until morning," remarked Vivian, judicially, "it must be very bad. I think I'll stay here."

"It will interest you," I ventured.

"Well, what is it?" asked Vivian.

"He is going to announce his engagement to Kathryn Kent," I stated impressively. Vivian sat upright.

"What?" she cried in such evident surprise that I rejoiced.

I repeated my announcement.

Vivian's chin again sank into its white cradle and again she gazed into the fire. "And is that what you have been preening yourself about?" she queried. "I

think that you have made a very bad botch of the whole affair. I was afraid that I couldn't trust you with a really delicate matter."

It took me at least three minutes to remember where I was and what had happened. There is no danger of my becoming conceited as long as I know Vivian. There was only one thing left for me to say.

"But you frowned," I cried exultantly.

"What do you mean?" she asked calmly.

"Why," I explained, somewhat confusedly, "when the others laughed, you looked very cross."

"And that means—?"

I thought a moment and then jumped again. "That you care for me," I cried, boldly.

But I found that when you jump, you don't always light in the same place, for Vivian merely smiled and asked, "So you think that I ought to be pleased when I see my friends, and *acquaintances*, (and she emphasized it, too), making a vulgar display of themselves in a public place?"

She was still gazing into the fire.

"Look at me, Vivian," I commanded. But she wouldn't. So I sat down on the hearthrug, between her and the flames. And then she did.

"But you frowned," I persisted.

She looked at me steadily and I gazed into those dark eyes of hers. And, just as I was going to grovel about on the rug and make a spectacle of myself generally (and it wouldn't have done any good, for I have tried it twice), Vivian's eyes fell and she said:

"I think that we would better join the others, Court."

"But you frowned," I persisted, as she rose and walked toward the door.

She hesitated on the threshold. "And if I did?" she queried.

"There is but one thing that could make me happier," I said.

"Then I did—" she said, softly.

"Vivian!" I cried.

And then a roguish gleam chased the softness from her eyes and she cried, "For the sun was very bright you know." And with a laugh, was gone.

How Miggsby Got Even

BY KENNETH F. HARRIS

Mr. Miggsby, in his sumptuous morocco slippers and magnificent velvet smoking jacket, standing outside his palatial apartment in the marble and onyx vestibule of the Midas and shaking his gold nose-glasses at the janitor, said in a peremptory tone, "I spoke to you about it, yesterday. I'm not in the habit of speaking twice about matters of this sort. If that door catch is not fixed inside of half an hour, there's going to be trouble."

"I can't help that," said the janitor, flushing a little at the tone, "I'm afraid I won't be able to fix it for you in half an hour. I've all I can attend to just now. If you like to wait until I have a little time I'll see what I can do for you, but I don't promise to fix it to-day—or to-morrow, for that matter."

"You don't, eh?"

"No, sir," said the janitor sturdily.

"We'll see," said Mr. Miggsby. "I say you'll fix it or you'll hunt another job. That's all I've got to say to you."

"If you'll excuse me," said the janitor, "I don't think you have as much as that to say about it."

"I'll show you, my man," said Mr. Miggsby, whose face had grown as purple as his smoking jacket. "I'll just show you."

The janitor turned on his heel. He felt that his temper was giving out. The next moment Mr. Miggsby's door closed with a violent slam.

"I wonder if he *will* get me bounced," ruminated the janitor of the Midas. "He's mean and cranky enough to do it, doggone his old hide. He seems to think that because he's got money he owns the town. I'm not going to take everything from him, though. I suppose he'll see Mr. Watkins now. Maybe I'd better see him first."

He went below to his basement quarters, washed and changed his clothes and half an hour later was explaining the situation to Mr. Watkins, the downtown agent of the Midas.

"I've tried to be accommodating and

civil, sir," he said, "I don't think any of the other three tenants will tell you any different, but Mr. Miggsby is—"

"I know," said the agent, understandingly, "if renting wasn't so hard in the Midas I'd tell him to get out if he didn't like it, but it isn't everybody can afford to rent one of those apartments. It doesn't pay, as it is, and Mr. Brownlow has been trying to sell the property for the last year. He has too much capital invested in it for the size of the building, and the number of the tenants. I told him that from the start. I guess you'll have to put aside some of your other work and fix his lock for him—and smooth him down, Dave. You won't lose anything by it."

"Well," grumbled the janitor, "it's as you say, sir. If my orders is to fix the lock, I'll fix it. I've respect for my bread an' butter, if I haven't any for Mr. Miggsby. As smoothing him down, though, it's beyond me unless I took a blacksmith's rasp to the job. You know that yourself, sir."

"Well, just go easy," counseled the agent. "Let him sputter and keep your own temper. We all have to do that at times. You're a married man, aren't you, Dave?"

"Yes, sir," replied the janitor, smiling ruefully, "but that's different somehow."

As the janitor passed out of the office he touched his cap and stepped to one side to make way for an elderly gentleman with neat white side whiskers, who brushed aside the office boy and made his way with an assured step to the agent's room.

"Hello, Watkins," he said, briskly, throwing his gloves on the desk and sinking into a chair with the relieved sigh of the corpulently inclined. "How is everything?"

"Dead," replied the agent. "Nothing doing. How's everything with you, Mr. Brownlow?"

"I'm in a bad way," said the visitor. "Wildly improbable as it may appear, I'm in need of money. I've got to have

money. I can't do without money. And so I have come to you."

"I'm glad to see you," said the agent, "but I don't see any logical sequence in that last remark. I could use a little money myself."

"Why haven't you sold that confounded Midas property for me? What have you been doing?"

"I'd have sold it for you long ago if it hadn't been for one thing."

"What's that?"

"Nobody wants to buy. It's too good—too much gorgeousness—too much elegant expensiveness about it."

"Don't I know that?" cried the owner. "Didn't I pay for it? Has it brought me in two per cent on the investment, hang it! You go on serenely collecting the rents and deducting your sinful commission and that's all you care."

"Well, it might pay in New York, but I guess we're not educated up to it here in Chicago," said the agent. "Our tastes are too simple and democratic. If you sell you'll have to sell at a sacrifice. A hundred thousand is cheap, but I can't make anybody cough up that amount. I can't take my moneyed clients gently but firmly by the throat and choke it out of them. I don't think I could coax an offer with a sandbag."

"Then you're a business failure," said Mr. Brownlow severely. "Anybody can sell a property that buyers are clamoring for. Ingenuity, Watkins, diplomacy, resource—that's what I expected you to use. I want you to sell that property for me. If you can get a hundred thousand out of it, there's a ten thousand dollar commission in it for you. That ought to stimulate your sluggish brain."

The telephone bell at the agent's desk rang. He took up the receiver. "Hello!" he said. "Yes, this is Mr. Watkins.—Yes.—Oh, yes, how do you do?—Complaint? I'm sorry to hear that.—What was that?—No, I don't hear you.—Oh!—He had an instrument?—Oh, insolent? I didn't catch it. I think perhaps I might. I'm busy now, but in the course of half an hour or so, if you will be in then.—Don't mention it. I'll be around then. Good-bye."

He hung up the receiver with a preoccupied air.

"Now—" began Mr. Brownlow.

"Wait a moment," said the agent, frowning and tapping his teeth with a pencil in a thoughtful manner.

"If I did sell it," he continued at last, "there ought to be fifteen per cent in it. You see, I'd lose my rent commissions."

"Not necessarily."

"If the man I have in view should buy it, I think I would. Say fifteen per cent and I'll risk it."

"You're a wolf," said the owner, "but it's a go."

"You'll have to conduct the sale, however," said the agent. "My part will be to send you a buyer who will make you an offer. You can use your own judgment about accepting it, only I stipulate for fifteen per cent on the hundred thousand. We'll call it a fee of fifteen thousand. You can sell it for twenty thousand then if you like, but I'd advise you to stick out."

"If I agree to this it's got to be done inside of a week," said Mr. Brownlow.

"I'll make a memorandum to that effect," said the agent. "Further," he added, "the building remains entirely in my charge up to the consummation of the sale. Mind you, I don't know that I can manage this business, but there's a chance of it. I'll write the buyer's name on a slip and enclose it in an envelope. We'll put that envelope and our agreement in escrow. If you sell to the party I name I get my fee, if not, we won't either of us be any the worse off."

"Suits me," said Mr. Brownlow. And so it was arranged.

As soon as Mr. Brownlow had taken his departure, Mr. Watkins donned his coat and hat and left the office, saying that he would return within the statutory five minutes. He made his way to a tall building a few blocks distant and was whisked up in an elevator to the tenth floor. There he entered a suite of offices whose splendor of tesselated floor, oriental rug, plate glass and mahogany recalled the Midas irresistibly to his mind. Having presented his credentials, he was admitted first to an ante-room and a scrutinizing secretary, and then to the august presence of Mr. Miggsby himself.

Mr. Miggsby in white waistcoat, black frock and spats, enthroned behind his massive mahogany desk, his gold-rimmed eyeglasses perched astride his fleshy nose and his omnipotent check book beneath his elbow. This Miggsby it was the foolhardy janitor had braved!

"Good morning, sir," said Mr. Watkins, acknowledging with a bow of exquisite politeness the gracious wave of the Miggsbian paw toward a chair. "I couldn't hear very well over the telephone, but I gathered that you have a complaint to make," he continued.

"You are right," said the great man, with a portentous frown, "I have a complaint to make. That ruffianly janitor of yours has been insolent and refuses to attend to his business. I want him discharged."

"I am surprised to hear this," said the agent, in a grieved tone. "Will you tell me the circumstances, Mr. Miggsby?"

"One of the confounded locks in the infernal closets sprung so that I couldn't shut it without banging the door. I told this fellow of yours about it and he said he'd attend to it. A day went by, sir,—twenty-four hours—and he hadn't done a thing about it. I caught him in the vestibule and told him that I wanted him to fix it right away, and he, by gad! coolly tells me he hasn't time and I'd have to wait. Why, confound him, I—er—he!"

Mr. Miggsby, overcome with the recollection of the janitor's temerity, gasped for expression.

"Well?" queried Mr. Watkins, mildly.

"Well!" exclaimed Mr. Miggsby explosively. "Well, is it? What do you mean by well, sir?"

"It isn't necessary for you to raise your voice, Mr. Miggsby," said the agent, gently, but with a glitter in his gray eye. "I can hear you perfectly in your most ordinary tone. By 'well' I meant to ask you if that was all of your complaint, because if it is, I confess that I can see no ground for the janitor's discharge. You see, he has his duties to perform, and fixing your locks is not one of them. You should have written to me and I would have sent a locksmith to attend to it. If the man, who is a steady, industrious and

civil man, intimated that he would do what you asked at some future time, it was from a wish to be obliging, and not because it was any part of his business to do it."

Mr. Miggsby glared in rage and astonishment, the red in his face deepening to the appoplectic purple.

"If you spoke to him in the manner you have addressed me on one or two occasions, I should find excuse for him if he had kicked you," Mr. Watkins concluded, rising. "I am sorry that you have made me take time to come over here to listen to anything so foolish and frivolous as this."

"Get out of here," roared the outraged Mr. Miggsby, "I'll attend to your case as well as your janitor's. He pressed the button of his buzzer so that it sounded with the prolonged viciousness of a circular saw ripping into an oak plank, but Mr. Watkins was gone before its summons was answered.

The agent's first proceeding on reaching his own office was to call up the Midas. "Is that you, Dave?" he called. "Say, you needn't go to any trouble on account of that lock of Miggsby's. Don't do anything to it. Do you understand?—No, don't touch it on any account. I'm behind you. Be in his way when he comes home if you can, and if he says anything to you, give him to understand politely that he may go to the devil—politely, mind. I don't want to give him a good excuse to break his lease. That's good for two years longer.—Hey?—No. I'll tell you what. Ask him if he would like to have you ask me to send a locksmith—politely, mind.—Yes, that's it.—Good-bye."

Mr. Watkins left the telephone with a satisfied smile and then dictated a letter to his stenographer. It was addressed to Mr. Miggsby, and informed that gentleman that he, the agent, had made further inquiry into the matter of the lock and was convinced that the janitor was entirely justified in his course. Further, that a locksmith would call at Mr. Miggsby's apartment as early as possible to make what repairs were necessary. Moreover, that the janitor might receive requests from the tenants, but orders to that

functionary would be transmitted "from this office only."

"Rubbing it in," said Mr. Watkins, gleefully, with an appropriate movement of his own palms.

The janitor happened to be in the vestibule of the Midas when Mr. Miggsby alighted from his auto that same evening. He followed the agent's instructions, and his manner was perfectly respectful, but it was Mr. Miggsby who gave him to understand (and not politely) that he might go where complaints of insufficient heat were unknown.

The next morning shortly after the agent had opened his mail, his telephone bell rang and Mr. Brownlow's voice came querulously over the wire: "See here, Watkins, I've just received a letter from Miggsby, bristling with forcible adjectives. He says that you and the janitor are in a conspiracy to insult him and he wants to have the janitor fired and you becomingly jacked up. What the thunder is the trouble? It's bad enough to have the thing on my hands without being bully-ragged by tenants. What do I feed you oats for?"

"It's all right," said Mr. Watkins. "Don't you worry about it. You write him that you have every confidence in me—"

"But I haven't," interjected Mr. Brownlow.

"Well, play you have, then," said the agent. "Tell him that the conduct of the building is in my hands and that you must regretfully decline to interfere. You can do that, can't you?"

"I suppose so," said the owner of the Midas—"but—"

"It's all right, I tell you," said the agent. "You do what I say and see what happens then. Good bye." He hung up the receiver and chuckled.

What happened was that in due course the agent received a communication from Mr. Miggsby.

Sir:—I beg to inform you that I have just completed the purchase of the Midas Building and the leasehold of the ground that it occupies, at the intersection of

11th Street and Delaunay Avenue. It is my intention to place the property in the charge of a competent and trustworthy person—one whose business relations with the tenants will be conducted with common decency. To that end you will be good enough to surrender all books, accounts, vouchers and moneys pertaining to said property and to prepare for a rigid accounting at your earliest convenience.

JABEZ MIGGSBY.

The janitor of the Midas was startled by a bark at his elbow. Turning, he met the angry glare of Mr. Miggsby, tempered with a sneering smile of triumph.

"You can pack your goods and get out of this building, my man," said Mr. Miggsby abruptly. "I'll give you until to-morrow noon to get out. I've bought this property and I'm going to have a decent janitor in here. Out by to-morrow. Do you understand?"

The janitor stood gaping, as Mr. Miggsby turned his back on him and strutted majestically to his apartment. Then he sat limply on the stairs. "They've thrown me down," he said bitterly. "Thrown me down!"

The creaking of the street door roused him from his stupor presently and he started up at the sight of the beaming face of Mr. Watkins. Before he could utter a word of the reproaches that rose to his lips, the agent smote him heartily on the shoulder.

"Dave," he said. "I congratulate you. You are now chief engineer and garbage supervisor of the Superba. Ten a month advance over your present salary and two assistants to boss. Dave, you've got to get out of here. It's a sad thing for all of us, but we must submit to the inevitable, and here's a little contribution to the moving expenses, Dave."

He pressed into the wondering janitor's hand a nice new bill marked \$100 in each of the eight corners thereof.

And in the seclusion of his apartment Mr. Miggsby was gloating—revelling in his triumph and his revenge. He rubbed his hands joyfully.

"I guess I got even with 'em, darn 'em!" he said.

The Prophetic War Correspondent

BY GEORGE BRONSON-HOWARD

It is hardly possible to lose in a game when a blind goddess stands at the back of one's chair and hands one the high cards—that is to say, it is hardly possible if one has the slightest modicum of brains. The one to whom I refer is John Charles Hoddinott and the blind goddess is and always has borne the name of Luck. John Charles Hoddinott had the requisite modicum of brains—hardly more.

Luck had been handing Hoddinott the high cards ever since the days when he came up to New York from a little country village, and got on the staff of the *Clarion*. No one on the *Clarion* staff thought much of Hoddinott, because there was nothing in the man's make-up to inspire thoughts of the likeable kind. But he was humble at that period. He became the *Clarion's* war correspondent in the Philippines solely because he was the captain of a militia regiment ordered to service out there. The *Clarion* was operated on an economical basis, and saw no reason for paying the expenses of a high-salaried man to do their war correspondence when Hoddinott's expenses were being paid by Uncle Sam, and his services could be had at a very reasonable figure.

By securing for him an appointment on the general's staff, Luck again played into Hoddinott's hands. Having the requisite modicum, he sent satisfactory dispatches because he was in a position to get the news without much trouble. His services were satisfactory, and when the troubles were over in the Islands, the *Clarion* established Hoddinott in Manila as its regular correspondent incident to his informing them that he already held an Insular appointment and would send their dispatches for a moderate salary.

Hoddinott remained in Manila until the Russo-Japanese fracas was precipitated. The *Clarion* had not sent out a man and feared to miss the early part of the war. Hoddinott being but ten days' journey from the scene of action, was in receipt of a wire which ordered him to the

front in rush terms. Hoddinott secured leave from the Insular Government, packed his volunteer uniforms in his trunk, got out his revolvers, bought quantities of copy paper, and took the steamer for Hong-Kong.

In due time he came to Shanghai, and there he ran into Charles Ellerton Minories, novelist. Minories is a very celebrated person, as you who read may know. Do you not recall his "Divided Destinies?" A weekly paper was paying Minories a salary which nearly equalled that of the President of the United States to do the war.

Hoddinott met Minories, offered him cigarettes, had them refused, and was snubbed. But that affected Hoddinott not at all. He had his own opinions of himself, and nothing could change them. He tagged after Minories and explained what brotherhood between those of the Fourth Estate should be and would be as far as he was concerned.

Minories took a boat to Chefoo in order to escape Hoddinott, but Hoddinott discovered that he was going and took the same boat. At Chefoo, they put up at the Sea-View Hotel, and here Minories, tired of Hoddinott, proceeded to vitrillize him. Hoddinott's resentment was aroused. He replied to Minories in no uncertain terms. They quarreled and finally fought. Hoddinott being a much stronger man than Minories, knocked the novelist down and quitted the room.

Hoddinott left Chefoo for Ching-wang-tao the next morning. From the latter place, he took the train to Ying-kow, crossed the frozen river Lia-ho and came into our midst.

There were twelve of us in Newchwang at that time, and the dove of peace hovered over the mess which we had established in an old Chinese inn which was rehabilitated and fitted for our living purposes. We had a decent cook, four Chinese boys, and a stable. We were of one mind in that each of us purposed to secure attachment to the Russian forces. To this end

we lived very peacefully in Newchwang and tried to curry favor with General Kondratorovitch and the civil administrator, Grosse, who knew more about the war and told less than anyone in Manchuria.

Most of us had campaigned before and knew that the race is not always to the swift. The Russians had the right to deny the privilege of attachment if they chose. Their plea was that those who were prejudiced against them should not be allowed to report their doings. We saw the justice of this argument. Therefore we were careful to wire nothing inimical to the Russian cause even though we knew that many things were happening in Newchwang which would make good "copy" for the newspapers that had sent us to the land of the Manchu.

Now this we considered particularly artful on our part, for an uncensored wire was at Yingkow, just across the river; and we might send what we pleased without interference from the Russian censor. But we also knew that the slink-eyed Chinese clerks furnished to the Russians copies of every message sent by us, and we did not wish to commit to the care of these Celestials any sentiments that bespoke a desire for Russia's downfall.

So there we sat in Newchwang, quiet, restful, trained out of impatience. We were on a basis of friendship with the Russian officers. Often they bought champagne for us at the club. Once after taking consid-

erable of this same champagne, one of the Russian officers kissed Jimmy Archer. The fact that Jimmy was kissed proved that the Russian officer looked on Jimmy as a brother. The fact that Jimmy did not knock the officer sprawling proved that Jimmy was a very sagacious correspondent and was willing to stand much in order to compass his ends.

The time was drawing nigh when our patience was to be rewarded. General Kuropatkin had come to Newchwang and we had met him. Troops marched in and out and heavy guns were dragged down from Mukden. The ice in the river was breaking up and a Jap attack was believed imminent. Our permits, so

we were told, were on their way from St. Petersburg. Our papers were frantically wiring for news, and we were placidly advising patience. It gave us some satisfaction to advise patience to our managing editors. It was our only way of getting even for the number of times the Russians had commended to us the virtue of that same thing.

Then, into our midst like a bomb-ready-to-explode, came Hoddinott; and from the time of his coming vanished peace and quietness and entered chaos and disorder. We did not know Hoddinott in the first place or we would have thought many times before we admitted him as a member of our mess.

John Charles Hoddinott did not wait to become known to us before taking many liberties. From liberties, he passed on to



"John Charles Hoddinott."

insults. Lord! how that man went out of his way to insult us. Because he had been a volunteer officer, he imagined that he knew more of war than any of us, and he hesitated not at all in telling us so. He ridiculed our patience; said he'd soon show the Russians what was what. Then trouble began.

The second day Hoddinott was in town, the American consul lost a little of his judicial calm and in a moment of con-

Hoddinott will never realize what an ass he made of himself—he can't. To begin with, he strutted about in his uniform as captain of volunteers (which he had no right to wear) and insisted on being addressed as "Captain Hoddinott." He made an enemy of the British attache—a very nice fellow—who had been trying to help him. He was ejected from the mansion of the Russian civil administrator and warned never to come there again. He was arrested for speaking in too loud a tone to General Kondratorovitch; and Consul Hiller had to put in the better part of an afternoon effecting his release. Altogether, Hoddinott set an example of what a correspondent should not be when in a foreign country.

Of course, the worst thing for us was the fact that Hoddinott made an enemy in the civil administrator; and we found on calling the next day that the civil administrator was not receiving any war correspondents. We returned to our mess and cursed the young man from the *Clarion*.

As if he had not landed us in a bad enough hole, he needs must dig up all the stuff which we had left unused, and wire it. This stuff was anti-Russian. That was why we had not used it. Hoddinott not only used it but exaggerated it, making just the sort of stories that play up well under the head of "Russian Atrocities," or something of the sort, beloved by copy-readers.

Meanwhile Minories came to town, refused to join our mess on discovering that Hoddinott was a member of it, established himself in a little hotel and looked on. He didn't say much. That wasn't Minories' way.

But to return to Hoddinott. The stuff which he wired was more or less true; and, as I said before, we knew it would make



DRAWN BY DAN SAYRE GROESBECK

"We must get rid of that little beast Hoddinott."

fidence informed Douglas Lorry that if Hoddinott ever came into the American consulate again, he (the consul) would risk his official position and kick Hoddinott out. It seems that Hoddinott had been reading him a few lessons on the manner in which Consul Hiller should represent his country in a foreign land. That was Hoddinott. He knew so much more than anyone.

good "copy." So when Hoddinott began to heat the wires with it, our papers heated them the other way with inquiries couched in offensive language, relating the fact that the *Clarion* was beating us and beating us badly. Thus were we forced into wiring everything whether it was anti-Russian or not; for we knew that it would get out through Hoddinott and we derived no pleasure from contemplating the results of being scooped by him.

All this sort of thing would have been bad enough by itself; but Hoddinott, flushed with the idea that he was the only correspondent who dared show the Russians his mettle, became extremely offensive and insulting toward everyone. One day he went too far. By courtesy of the British residents of Newchwang we had been put up at the Newchwang Club, Hoddinott included. It happened that Hoddinott took a dislike to a big Englishman named Holroyd, and on this particular occasion he leaned against the bar by Holroyd's side and drew offensive comparisons between their respective countries, ending up with a wholesale criticism of Britons and some nasty personalities. Holroyd flushed all over and invited Hoddinott outside to settle their differences. The *Clarion* man refused and sneered at him; whereupon Holroyd called him a name which no man stands for and repeated his invitation. But instead of accepting, Hoddinott sailed in for Holroyd then and there and did for him. He was a good fighter was Hoddinott; but to do such a thing in a club to which he belonged only by courtesy was something no self-respecting man would do.

That settled Hoddinott with the club people. They fired him out. It was rather nasty for us Americans, you may well imagine.

I met Minories that night and he asked me over to his rooms at the hotel. Now, personally, I don't like Minories, his ways, his ideas, or his writings. He is too coldly intellectual, too devoid of the natural emotions, and too reserved to suit me; then, too, his outrageous theories about every man for himself without regard for honor or friendship pretty nearly set one crazy when Minories sets out to give them in his

icy logic. Minories is what I call an *unmoral* man—he couldn't be immoral because, truth to tell, I don't believe he ever had any morals. No man with morals could have done what Minories did in Hoddinott's case. True enough, Hoddinott deserved it, but a man with the right ideas wouldn't care to mix up in that sort of thing.

Minories knew this very well. That, no doubt, is the reason he swore me to secrecy before he unfolded his scheme. I



DRAWN BY DAN SAYRE GROESBECK

"It's a dirty trick, I'll not stand for it."

don't know why he selected me for his confidence; but I suppose it was necessary to "try it on the dog" and I was the most convenient at the time.

"Look here, Risley," he said to me, "if we expect to make the front with the Russians, we must get rid of that little beast, Hoddinott. He's done us more harm now than if we'd gotten out in the square in a body and declared for Japan. Now I didn't make this journey out here to be left in the lurch when the fighting

begins. The Linleys want this stuff badly: they're paying me a lot; and I must deliver the goods. Besides the Harveys want to bring out a book by me on the war. So you see I can't have my chances jeopardized by a bumptious young fool, and what's more, I'm not going to —"

I asked him what the remedy was to be. In order that you may understand our situation at the time, I'll tell you that we hadn't the slightest idea where Kuroki's army was going at the time except what drifted to us from Tokyo via London, and that was precious little. We, of course, understood that Kuroki intended to try to cross the Yalu; but the Russians so laughingly pooh-poohed the chances of such an occurrence and impressed us with the strength of their fortification on the Ai River that none of us thought the little beggars had much of a chance—at any rate, not for months. We didn't take the Russians' words entirely. There were two British officers in Newchwang who had been on the Yalu, and who declared that, properly defended, it was impassable. At that time, we had lots more respect for Russian prowess than we have now.

The night on which Minories outlined his scheme to rid us of Hoddinott's presence was that of April 30th, 1904. And this was the scheme: "I've written a cablegram," he said, taking a folded paper from his pocket. "I'll read it to you," he said. It was a vivid pen-picture of the taking of the Ai forts and palisades, the crossing of the Yalu on pontoons, and the utter route of the Russian forces. Minories was an expert on military tactics and his account was glowingly plausible. The local color was all correct too, for Minories had studied up the theatre of war pretty closely. The cablegram finished with this statement: "This is exclusive news and you may rely on it, but the Associated Press will not have it for at least twenty four hours. It is a clean beat." He looked at me with a dry grin.

"You bet the A. P. won't have it," I returned, grinning also. "What awful rot, Minories! I don't say the Japs can't cross the Yalu, but it'll be many moons before they do it. At the present time

they've got as much chance as a snowball in perdition."

"Hope you don't think I'm going to send that to my sheet," drawled Minories. "I don't cable much anyhow. Kindly note to whom this cable is addressed and also the signature at the end."

I took the typewritten sheet in hand. When I noted address and signature, I gave a little squeal. For I understood Minories then.

The cablegram was addressed to "*Clarion, New York,*" and the signature was "Hoddinott."

Minories took the paper from my hand. "Rather a good scheme to get rid of the little bounder—what?" he asked with another of his dry grins. "When his paper gets that and runs half a dozen extras, only to find it's a fake, what'll happen to *Captain Hoddinott*—eh?"

"He'll be fired, of course," I stammered. "Good God! Minories! You don't really mean to send that—it'll ruin him forever. Good Lord! you don't mean to do it. No, that's damned rotten—you won't—"

Minories folded the paper and put it in his pocket.

"Oh let up on that," he said. "Of course I'm going to send it. Think I spent all that time for fun. Rather not. This is going just as soon as I get across the river to the cable office."

He got up, pulled on his fur-trimmed jacket, and knocked some mud off his riding boots. Then he lighted a cigarette.

"But look here," I protested hotly. "It's a dirty trick. I'll not stand for it. It'll ruin him."

"He deserves to be ruined—little beast," said Minories. "And I'll beg you to remember that you passed your word to keep quiet, and I know you're not the kind to break your word. So just forget about this, Risley. You're not doing it. So long."

And with that he went out and down to the river-bank, where he took a boat across to Yingkow. Here he filed the dispatch, and when he came back, a couple of hours later, he informed me that he had spent the money necessary to get it to Tien-tsin, where, by virtue of Hod-



DRAWN BY DAN SAYRE GROESBECK

"We set to work on our breakfast, but none of the crowd was very hungry."

dinott's R. T. P. (receiver-to-pay) it would be forwarded on to New York.

Then, in no measured terms, I told Minories what I thought of him. He only grinned and said something about the pity of being handicapped with eighteenth century ideas of honor. "If you look at it that way, why don't you go tell Hoddinott. It's time enough yet to recall the dispatch. But you won't—of course not. You gave me your word of honor: that binds you. Now, I haven't any word of honor. Oh, Risley! what an utterly inconsistent ass you are." In all good-nature he proffered me a cigarette and went away. There's no use in arguing with a man of Minories' stamp.

When I turned in that night, I was extremely sorry for Hoddinott: and sorrier for his paper. It's no pleasant thing to run a fake like that and have all the paper's rivals shouting "Canard" at it.

But the next day, I quit sorrowing for Hoddinott and began to extend a few

sympathetic thoughts to myself. My Chinese boy awakened me at seven o'clock and handed me a cablegram. I read something to this effect:

"*Clarion* correspondent sends complete account Japanese victory on Yalu River and *Clarion* has beaten town. Associated hasn't confirmed, yet says probable. Wake up and send story. Rush."

Then in the glory of my manhood and the consciousness that I was right, I seized my fountain pen and indited something to the effect that the *Clarion* correspondent was a liar and that there hadn't been any Japanese victory. I sent this off and felt satisfied that I had called down my managing editor in a way he would not soon forget.

When I went in for breakfast, I found the rest of the fellows busily writing away at cablegrams, and it transpired that each one of them had received a cable similar to my own. That is, all except Hoddinott. He had been drunk the

night before and did not know exactly what he had done. Now, spread before him, was a cablegram that worried him considerably more than ours did.

"What's this you sent about a Japanese victory, Hoddinott," asked Carroll. "You're always getting us into hot water."

"Oh! go soak your head," replied Hoddinott rudely. "I'm not a bureau of information."

"No—a bureau of misinformation," supplemented Jimmy Archer suavely. "Don't bother about it, boys. From what I saw of Hoddinott last night he wasn't fit to send anything intelligible."

Hoddinott glared at him and rolled a cigarette. We set to work on our breakfast, but none of the crowd was very hungry. While we sipped coffee and smoked, Minories came in. He made no allusion to the night before by either word or gesture and listened passively to the explanations from our crowd.

"I wouldn't worry about anything Hoddinott sent," he comforted.

If Hoddinott hadn't been so worried, I think he would have struck Minories. There was an ugly look in his eye. But Minories had hardly spoken when one of our Chinese boys came in and handed Hoddinott another yellow envelope.

Hoddinott dropped hot ashes on his hands, and his fingers trembled as he tore open the cable. He looked at it, his eyes blinking rapidly, and then held it close to his eyes, scrutinizingly it with the most eager expression I have ever seen on man's face. Then he got up slowly and went across the room where he poured out a long dose of Scotch. He drank it down neatly, then turned a sneering eye on us.

"You people listen to this," he said. And this is what he read us:

"Congratulations on your splendid beat. We were ahead of New York and London both by twenty hours. Associ-

ated Press confirmed your story ten minutes ago. Yours varies considerably, but main facts the same —"

There was a lot more to it, but that's about all I heard. I felt weak at the stomach. I looked around and saw the sickest looking crowd I ever want to see: each one looked as if he had been crushed to earth by the sudden descent of a heavy body on his head. But Minories didn't blink an eye. He went on smoking a cigarette, and presently asked, in a perfectly cool tone, the manner in which Hoddinott had secured his information. Now Hoddinott didn't know, but he wasn't telling anyone that.

He replied with his usual courtesy: "I guess that'll be about all from you, Minories. I beat the whole bunch of you, and that ought to hold you for a while. Some time I'll teach you how to be war correspondents." Then he hid himself across the river and, I suppose, got the dispatch from the files. What he thought when he read it, I don't know. He didn't tell anyone. He had the requisite modicum of brains, and he played the high cards that the blind goddess put into his hand.

When Minories and I got outside, I looked at him. "You're too realistic a romancer," I said. "That's what you are!" I was a little bitter. It's not pleasant to see success come to a man like Hoddinott.

Minories shook his head a little sadly. "I'm too careful about details and local color," he replied. "It's hell, isn't it, Risley?"

I said it was, and that's all we ever said about it. But that's the way Hoddinott made his *coup*; and afterwards, when he was taken down with enteric fever and had to be shipped home, the *Clarion* made him their London correspondent.

All of which proves that Luck is a very blind goddess indeed.

When Ainsley Came to Rome

BY ANNA S. RICHARDSON

Some tourists carry cameras; others are carried by their cameras. Arthur Ainsley belonged to the latter class. Whither his camera led, he followed. Hence he had captured a long string of first prizes, and his eyes had feasted on many exquisite scenes, not generally vouchsafed to the gaze of the typical tourist. For the same reason, he now stood before the steps of the flower market in Rome, arguing violently with his guide.

"Here, you Italian descendant of Ananias, you promised to steer me away from churches! I'm tired of dead things. I want to see something that's alive—good views; real bits of Rome. Do you understand?"

"Si, signor," replied the guide, with a bored expression and a resigned shrug of his shoulder. "Then we will go next to where the children play in the public park, the Villa Borghese—"

"Isn't there an art gallery, too?" interrupted the suspicious Ainsley. "I'll wager they check my camera the first thing—"

A group of Italian girls in peasant garb lounged against the stone coping of the great staircase. It was their morning rendezvous, pending the arrival of artists in search of models. One of them stepped forward.

"The signor desires to take pictures of the real life of Rome, or perhaps her most beautiful views?"

Ainsley wheeled, pleasantly surprised at the sound of his own language spoken in a soft, deprecating tone, and with a delightful Italian accent.

"Ah, there is no place like Rome, signor!"

"I'll take your word for it," replied Ainsley, good-humoredly, "but so far it has appealed to me with all the cheerfulness of a graveyard. This chap has been dragging me from catacomb to cemetery, from the tombs of saints, to the monuments to genius, and—"

The girl smiled.

"The signor should see the old Rome. I will tell your guide of a street where you will find a wine-shop built in the cliff's wall, and just beyond, the most picturesque smith's shop in all Rome. Then at three in the afternoon, you should drive out the Appian way, beyond the great tomb—you remember—Cecilia Metella? You have seen it?"

Ainsley shook his head.

"No; we've been doing underground stunts for two solid days."

"Ah, then you have much pleasure before you. Beyond Cecilia Metella lies a ruined villa, where trees bend to meet each other above a sun-lit path, where vines and violets creep from the ruins, and at three o'clock it is perfect to photograph, when the sun light comes level from the west—"

She turned abruptly to the guide and her entire bearing underwent a change. Ainsley's grip on his camera loosened. Only the strap over his shoulder saved the expensive machine from being shattered on the stones at his feet. The girl spoke rapidly in Italian; but that imperious uplift of her head, that air of authority in voice and gesture!

The flower market with its buyers and sellers, the encircling ring of languidly interested models, and beyond them the rows of sweet-scented blossoms, first whirled around him, then faded from his view. He was back at the academy. Before him was his easel. Behind him stood the master-painter, and on every side were eager pupils, bending to catch the words of praise so rare from the lips of the master. But even as he spoke, there entered a messenger boy who handed the master painter a yellow envelope. And the master painter in turn handed it to Ainsley. Then—

"I have explained. He now knows what the signor desires, and it will be so done—"

With a courtesy, the girl rejoined her companions. Ainsley pulled himself to-

gether, and his hand slipped into his pocket. The girl flushed.

"No, no! The signor is quite welcome. We wish to see the artists come to Rome."

"But I am not an artist," said Ainsley, curtly; "just a camera fiend. But I do want some good photographs of Rome, and I don't think this man and I can ever hit it off together. I'll pay him off for the day if you'll take his place."

Again that proud uplift of her head, and the girl moved further back.

"Come," continued Ainsley, "acting as guide is easier work than posing. I'll pay you four dollars for your day's work, double what this man agreed to go far, and I'll guarantee you cannot make that posing for some second-rate artist."

The flush had faded from her cheeks. Her brown eyes glowed almost blackly against the whiteness of her skin. She glanced over her shoulder at the other girls, and one of them spoke to her rapidly in Italian. Plainly, they thought her crazy to hesitate for an instant. Four dollars—twenty lire—and nothing to do but ride round in a carriage with this very peculiar signor from America!

"Better come," urged Ainsley, a trifle less curtly. "I rather think this brigand of a cab-driver will pass muster as a chaperon, and I promise to deliver you here at the flower market at six o'clock sharp."

At the word "chaperon" the girl flashed him a proud glance, and as he finished speaking she stepped forward.

"As the signor wishes! I will show him the finest views of all Rome!"

Five minutes later, Ainsley's ex-guide sauntered down the narrow Via Due Marcelli, with a ten-lire note in his pocket and amused contempt for the American's bad business management in his heart. For could he not have hired the girl for five lire? Surely! Then it must be true that money sometimes dropped from American trees. And in the opposite direction Ainsley and the model, seated in a landau, were headed for the city's oldest gate.

For the thirty-seventh time since they had left the flower-market, the long-suf-

ferring driver jerked his horses to a standstill. Ainsley was focusing his kodak on a plodding, dun-colored shepherd, following his patient dog and tiny flock up the hillside. The Appian way was flooded with that indescribable amethyst light which often precedes an Italian sunset.

"The signor wastes his film," remarked the girl, with a shrug of her shoulder. "It is too late."

Ainsley glanced at her over her shoulder.

"I don't know about that. For me the sun is still shining—pure gold—the gold of Paradise."

He snapped the little shutter, signalled the driver and leaned back. They rode on in silence, the same silence which had fallen between them whenever the girl was not fulfilling her duties as a guide. At luncheon he had tried to draw her out, concerning the life and work of a model, but she had parried his questions skilfully, though with the utmost courtesy and respect.

Suddenly, as they rounded a bend in the road, a wild Italian melody leaped out upon the air. On the porch of a wayside inn, three men sang a fiery drinking song, gesticulating more madly with each revolution of the landau's wheels. Ainsley smiled at the girl.

"Funny how they can spot an American tourist through dust or twilight gloom. They wouldn't be singing, would they, if we had turned to the right instead of the left?"

The girl answered unsmilingly, her heavily lashed eyes looking straight ahead.

"But for the American tourist, many in Italy could not live!"

"Very well," in Ainsley's clear-cut, matter-of-fact tones, "we will stop and reward those hard-working youths by purchasing a bottle of their vile Chianti." And he prodded the driver in the back, a hint that Jehu was not slow to take.

"But we will not be back at six," said the girl, hurriedly, as Ainsley reached up a hand to assist her.

"I judged as much from the joyous expression of our driver's face. I believe that after six o'clock he may double

his charges and still keep within the law," replied Ainsley, with grim humor, as he led the way to a table in the most secluded corner of the porch. The singing had ceased with their arrival, and now it was replaced by the tinkle of mandolins and guitars. All around them was the deepening amethyst light, and from the little plot of ground below the porch rose the perfume of myriad violets.

"I've a notion we could get rather a decent dinner here," remarked Ainsley, as he deposited his precious camera beside his chair. "What do you say?"

The girl looked down demurely. Her hands were clasped lightly in the silken folds of her apron.

"As the signor wishes!"

Ainsley glanced at her sharply.

"Well, the signor wishes you'd have an opinion of your own—like—like—"

"Like the American girls, signor?" interrupted the girl quickly, without raising her eyes to his.

Ainsley laughed shortly, then turned to signal a waiter.

"That wasn't exactly what I intended to say," The waiter bowed obsequiously at Ainsley's elbow. "Tell him that he is to give the driver some dinner, also, then, in your language so he'll understand, tell him we want the best Italian meal he can put up."

"Si, signor," the girl replied, and then, turning, she gave the order in a manner which made the waiter stop smirking at her, and sent him, wondering, to the kitchen.

The amethyst light deepened into richest purple, and the proprietor regretfully lighted the few evil-smelling lamps which hung from the porch roof. The waiter brought on marrons glace and coffee. The moon rose and scattered the purple shadows, and the thrifty proprietor straightway blew out the lights.

"Good boy," remarked Ainsley, under his breath, and filled his glass. The girl had held her hand over her glass with a little trick that had made Ainsley's eyes dance in spite of his efforts at self-control. Tourists in parties of two, three and four, stopped at the little inn for their wine, and in passing, they gazed

curiously, first at the well set-up American with his rough tweeds and his trimly cut Van Dyke beard, then at the model in her simple peasant gown and square silk head-dress.

"Heigh-ho," said one of a group of college boys, "doing" Italy with a tutor. "That's the luck which comes with being a lazy artist-dog."

The girl drew in her breath sharply, so sharply that Ainsley caught the sound.

"I am honored," he said, as the lads passed on. "I once had ambitions in that direction."

"Si, signor," said the girl, mechanically, as she leaned her hot face against the porch pillar.

"Yes, I actually went to an academy in my own country, worked like a dog and had visions of startling the world as a twentieth century Raphael—"

The girl did not reply, and he shifted his position.

"Funny, isn't it—how easy you can imagine you are a genius when you have the money to pay teachers for encouraging you in the fallacy? But you see, there came a day when my father died—and there was no more money to fee teachers. Instead, there was work for me to do. It wasn't easy work, and I hated it—hated it all the more because it separated me from—a girl!"

There was a long silence, then from the figure leaning against the pillar came the words, politely interrogative:

"Si, signor?"

"She *was* a genius—we all knew that—"

The figure by the pillar shivered slightly.

"And she could not have a career, you see, and marry a man who had family fortunes to retrieve. So she came over here—to Paris first, where she did some very good fashion work for American papers. Then she came to Rome to get close to art's very heart. It must have been deadly, don't you know—that fashion work—"

The girl neither moved nor spoke. Ainsley lighted a fresh cigarette.

"But I never forgot her, and when—well, when things looked better for the

family fortunes, I began to hunger again for art. Not that I ever expected to paint, because mixing with the realities of life in the commercial world had taught me to put the true value on my artistic abilities, but just to be in the same atmosphere with the girl I had never forgotten. And so I turned to my camera. It brought better results, and quicker, than my brush ever could. And when the family fortunes reached the point where they could get along without me, I started for Italy. I thought perhaps she might still be here, though eight years—

"It is late, signor, and we Italian girls—"

She turned as if to rise, and in so doing, she flung one of her long, heavy braids across the corner of the table. Ainsley's hand crept forward and closed upon it. He leaned over, and looked straight into her eyes.

"Tell me, signorita, do all Italian models wear black wigs—with bronze hair beneath?"

The girl fell back in her chair, and even in the moonlight Ainsley could see the color fade from her face. Instinctively she raised her trembling hands, and drew the rolls of black hair closer to her ears.

"Good God, Jessie," Ainsley exclaimed, throwing all pretence to the winds. "Did you think that a mere trifle like a wig would deceive me?"

She did not answer and his tones turned bitter.

"Because you did not recognize me—"

"How do you know that I did not recognize you?" Her voice changed. Every trace of Italian accent had vanished. "How do you know?" she repeated, with scorn in every inflection. "I knew you the moment you stepped from the carriage. I recognized every gesture you made, every dear little American twist you gave to your words, long before you even saw me. That was when I should have turned and run—yes, run

as fast as I could have gone—from the Trinita dei Monti—and you. But you can't understand what it meant to me, to stop and listen, 'to watch—after—after—" She leaned forward, her face tense and drawn. "Before I came to this, I nearly starved, but that was nothing, nothing at all, compared to what I have endured since, posing for my own countrymen and for girls like myself who had fair hopes. I had failed so utterly. That was the first lesson Rome taught me—I could not even copy! There was nothing else! I spoke Italian, I had Italian blood in my veins on my mother's side. It was at least honest work and models are always needed; so—"

Ainsley gripped the edge of the table until the veins on his hands stood out like fine iron cable strands.

"And not once in all this time, did you think of writing to me?" he demanded.

Her head sank on her breast. The words came to him in a whisper.

"Yes, every day—every night—every hour—"

"Then why didn't you?" he asked, almost harshly.

"Because," she murmured, "I had heard that you were—rich!"

Ainsley drew a long breath.

"Was that all?"

Her eyes met his unflinchingly.

"Yes," she said quietly, "but that was enough. When you were poor, I had wanted a career. When you became rich, I could not tell you that I needed your love."

"Maria," said the thrifty proprietor of the inn, as he and his wife barred the door for the night, "in the morning you will go to church very early, and pray the Virgin Mother that she send us another rich American artist. Twenty lire for that dinner, and the last bottle he forgot to open!"

A Breach of the Quarantine

BY E. CRAYTON McCANTS

Take notice that it all happened in the last century—in the seventies. The Arkansas of that date had few railways and no scientific knowledge of disease; in consequence whereof, there were steamboats on every available stream—it didn't take much to make a stream available either, some owners claiming for their vessels an ability to navigate anything wetter than a heavy fall of dew. Mosquitoes were in every swamp, and now and again there was an epidemic of yellow fever in most of the river towns.

To-day all that is changed, of course. The river towns shorn of their old-time traffic are well nigh deserted, the boats lie rotting on the white sand-bars that fringe the picturesque "bends," and benevolent-looking, spectacled gentlemen pursue the mosquitoes with offensive weapons in the shape of crude petroleum. Moreover, a citizen caught in the throes of a preliminary ague sees no more in his tortured mind the dread symptoms of "yellow jack," but turns with comparative ease to his quinine bottle and a quiet contemplation of his "third day chills." Wherefore the Arkansas of to-day is commonplace and very like the rest of the world.

But it was on August 3rd, year of grace, 1878, that Doctor Sam Tolman sat in his office at Duvallstown on the White, consuming much tobacco, communing with his thoughts, and viewing life disconsolately. Two years before the young physician had come from the overcrowded East to build up a practice in the village. From the point of view of the said East, where Tolman had attained to honor as the captain of a baseball nine and had incidentally acquired a medical diploma, the task had seemed an easy one enough. Duvallstown was "a growing place," the country about it was fertile, and the bulk of its miscellaneous population was notoriously prosperous. Surely such a community would welcome with open arms even a very small proportion of medical light from the East.

But on his arrival Tolman found that

there were factors in the problem which he had neglected to take into account—the principal being that already there were two physicians residing in Duvallstown. Notwithstanding this he opened an office at a venture, and on the third day of August just two years later he lit his pipe, took stock of his progress, and pronounced that venture a failure.

It was true, he admitted, that he had some patronage of a certain undesirable kind. The negroes who idled about the streets consulted him freely and paid him with difficulty, and now and then he was in request at the bedside of an unlucky sawmill hand, or of some turbulent riverman who "had got shot up in a row down on Front;" but any clientele among solid and respectable folk seemed to be wanting entirely. Cameron, who was his senior by forty years, had the cream of the "family practice," and all that was left by Cameron was duly gathered in by Timms. No, the town held nothing for Tolman, and Tolman, in his cloud of tobacco smoke, gloomily acknowledged it.

As a matter of cold fact, however, the situation was not nearly so desperate as Tolman made himself believe. Men are slow to change their medical advisers, and it is no uncommon thing for a newly-fledged *Æsculapius* to have to bide his time. Tolman knew this to be true—had known it from the first—also he had a small income independent of his earnings wherewith to pay his board and to buy fuel for his pipe. In a few more years, when the people had come to know him better and age had had its way with Cameron, the field would likely be his. No, albeit Tolman was disingenuous and argued otherwise, it was not really the lack of work that was troubling Tolman—it was Timms.

No two men having much in common could be more unlike than were the two junior physicians of the good village of Duvallstown. They were about the same age, they were bred to the same pro-



DRAWN BY HOWARD V. BROWN

"Communing with his thoughts and viewing life discontentedly."

fession, and they were both in love with Miss Wentworth. On the other hand, Tolman was lean and shy, while Timms was well-nourished and assured. Tolman was reserved and Timms was a "mixer," Tolman had strength and didn't show it, Timms showed strength and didn't have it.

And, although the two young men had established themselves in the village at nearly the same time, Timms, owing to that showiness which almost invariably accompanies shallowness, and to an engaging freedom of manner very characteristic of the man, had found his way much more readily than had Tolman

into the good will of the inhabitants; for Tolman was slow of speech and socially he was awkward. It is likely, however, that Tolman could have endured all this quite philosophically had there not been a lady in the case.

But Evelyn Wentworth, the daughter of old Judge Wentworth, whose big, white-porticoed house overlooked the river and the town, was easily the prettiest girl in Duvallstown, and for more than a year by her beauty and her feminine charm she had held in close captivity the hearts of both Tolman and Timms. Tolman, after his manner, worshipped afar off and in silence; Timms, on the other hand, had pressed his suit with a suave assurance which alternately irritated and pleased the girl.

On all occasions he became her self-enlisted cavalier, and if at times she wearied of his babbling effusiveness and looked somewhat longingly in the direction of the self-controlled and impassive figure of Tolman, no one at all was the wiser because of it.

So, little by little, with no foundation in fact, but with a superstructure of conjecture that was added to day after day by the well directed effort of village gossip, the opinion went abroad that Timms was "the lucky man," and that before very long Judge Wentworth would have a son-in-law. It was because of this opinion, voiced irritably into his

unwilling ears, that Tolman sat in his office that hot August day and smoked and found his tobacco not at all to his taste.

Why could he not approach Evelyn easily, as Timms did, he asked himself? Why should his usually well-ordered heart climb insistently into his throat if he but asked her for a dance? Why should he stand aside always while Timms bore the prizes off?

He could not answer his questions, and it was warm and he stirred uneasily. Had his mood been less despondent he might, perhaps, have gone down into the street and mingled with his fellows—might even have strolled to the river bank, and taken heed of the close, still beauty of the day, and looked out appreciatively across the two hundred yards of blue water at the cool, dark shadows of the willows that fringed the farther shore. As it was, he simply rose, pushed aside the blue shade from a window, and looked out.

There was no vestige of change apparent in the street—as it was now so it had been since his advent here. Here and there men lounged about in their shirt-sleeves, some smoking, some plying palmetto fans. Over at the drug store, a clerk, towel in hand, was polishing the marble front of the soda fountain; away up at the crossing a farm wagon was passing, a little further along a pig grubbed diligently in the sandy earth for worms and for mulberry roots. He was about to turn away when the sight of a lady's parasol attracted his attention. He knew that parasol; it was Evelyn's, and there was—Timms, of course. With what an air of proprietorship the fellow approached her and piloted her across the way! Tolman dropped the shade and turned away. Possibly Timms had a right to look after the girl—everybody said that he had—but Tolman felt a strong inclination, nevertheless, to go down the stairs and to hurt Timms' feelings with his fist.

However, a little wholesome wrath is good for a man, especially if the man be despondent, and when Tolman had finished his mental estimate of Timms he found himself inclined to be hungry. Then, as if in answer to his thought, a

dinner gong jarred hoarsely, waking the echoes in the town and reverberating across the river.

As he walked toward his boarding house, Tolman's vagrant thoughts took another direction. What about the yellow fever that was abroad in New Orleans and was slowly creeping up the rivers? Was it true that a vagrant river-boat had taken the plague into Batesburg, fifty miles above? If so, how long might Duvallstown hope to escape?

When he had reached the table of the little inn that was misnamed "The City Hotel," Tolman found there the usual miscellaneous crowd—Booth, the druggist; Andrews, the town lawyer; Levy, the odd little Yankee who sold clothing; and a half dozen others. In the group there was Sellick, traveling salesman for a hardware house, who evidently was thinking of the fever rumors, too.

"—saw a nigger from there. *He* didn't know nothin' or else he wouldn't tell," went on the "drummer," as the physician took his seat. "They've got it, though—got it bad! They're throwin' the dead in the river, and it'll be here in a week!"

"Think so?" asked Andrews, lightly.

Sellick warmed to his theme. "I'll bet there's a case or two here right now," he averred. "Naturally, it begins among the mill-hands, and they hide the fact every time.—Isn't it so, Doctor?" He had caught Tolman's eye and he turned to him with interest.

Tolman frowned. "I have heard of no fever," he replied, "and if I had I wouldn't speak of it until I knew certainly. It's a serious matter, you know."

Andrews laughed at the thrust, but Sellick turned to Levy confidentially.

"They can't keep it away from here," he repeated. "I, for one, am going to get out!"

Tolman ate in silence. Of what use were men like Sellick, he asked himself, men who were always talking. When he had finished his meal, he arose and went out, but at the gate he met a messenger with a note from Cameron.

"Can you come down to my office?" asked the older physician. "I want

to see you and Timms right away."

It was growing dusk when Tolman got back at last to his own office. Tired out, he flung himself down and closed his eyes to think. For after all, Sellick had been right. This morning Cameron had found three cases of fever among the sawmill men, this afternoon there had been five. There was little need, now, even were the inclination left, to trouble one's self con-



DRAWN BY HOWARD V. BROWN

"With what an air of proprietorship, the fellow piloted her across the way."

cerning employment, for the plague was spreading rapidly and it was clear that he and Cameron and Timms had the fight of their lives on their hands.

Timms? By the way, where was Timms? Cameron had sent for him, but somehow he had failed to turn up.

Under the stress of his weariness Tolman sank into a doze, but presently he roused again. In the street without there was an odd commotion—the tramp of many feet, the rattle of wagons and of

carts, and the low, hurried calls of man to man. For just one moment his curiosity was stirred and he sat up—then he understood.

The news of the outbreak of the plague had been given out; Cameron had telegraphed the state capital and even now the cordon of the quarantine was being rapidly drawn. Most of the people knew the meaning of that. For those who were left inside there would be the shunning of friend by friend, hunger, neglect, the searing scorch of the fever, and oftentimes death in the darkness and alone. So all who could go were going to-night, and even for these escape was doubtful, since every small town on the river bank was on the alert and would thrust forth in fear and trembling its line of local guards.

But by following the byways some would escape to the hills, and others, falling into the hands of the state authorities, would be gathered into detention camps at some far healthier place; hence it seemed to Tolman good that those frightened ones should go, for then there would be fewer to nurse, fewer to feed, less work for himself and Cameron and Timms.

Again his mind came back to Timms. How odd it was that Timms had not heard of the two new cases and had not come to consult with himself and Cameron. And when he thought of it, he remembered that the shutters of Timms' office were closed. Could it be that Timms— But in spite of his dislike of the man, Tolman's faith in his profession was great and he refused to entertain the thought.

A moment later he accounted to himself for everything. It was strange that he had not earlier recalled the difficulties that Evelyn and the old Judge must be in. Naturally, the servants had fled at the first alarm, and in such case the gouty

old jurist would be helpless. Of course, Timms had with his usual luck remembered all this and had taken them away to safety. Yes, that was the way of it, and to-morrow Timms would be back wearing, like a rose at his buttonhole, the everlasting gratitude of the two. He should have been pleased at this explanation, but somehow he did not feel so at all.

But while his thoughts had been rambling thus, the twilight had deepened and little by little, as vehicle after vehicle drew away, the noises of the street had quieted. Presently he recalled the fact that it was long past tea-time and that if he would work he must eat.

A dismayed expression crossed his face as he reasoned that the "hotel" would probably be deserted and he himself barred out, but a hurried investigation revealed to him that while indeed both landlord and guests were gone, the old negro cook, being immune, had remained and would willingly care for him. Under a running fire of her good-natured grumbling he ate, and when the demands of his appetite were satisfied, he went through the deserted hallways to his room on the upper floor.

Once out of reach of Mammy Dicey's voice, he sat down beside his window and began to consider anew the problems that confronted him. The town was silent. The fugitives were gone, and those who remained did not stir beyond their own house walls. Four blocks away he could see the lights in Cameron's house. Further along there was another light, and another. Suddenly he sat up with a start—there were lights at the Wentworth's, too.

It took him but a moment to get himself into his coat and to hurry out into the street. If she were there still—but it was only some caretaker, perhaps. As he approached the house, a door opened and a flood of light streamed down the driveway. Under the radiance the great white-columned porch stood out like some massive cameo, and on the steps, looking toward the town, he saw—Evelyn.

Eight miles south of Duvallstown Tol-

man chirruped to the mules and the tough little animals responded. Under the stress of the increasing pace the ancient "carryall" which he had with difficulty resurrected from the back lot of a livery stable, groaned a protest, but luckily it held together and the trio of belated fugitives rolled steadily on over the long straight road which now lay white and ghostly in the light of the new-risen moon.

Since the hour was late, the highway was deserted, for the great mass of the fugitives had crossed the river at the ferries and had gone directly West. Tolman had not been fool enough to follow in their wake, for he knew that even now they were being herded together to be crowded into the detention camps. So he was going south; the "carryall" lurched and jarred, and the dun coats of the hurrying beasts were white with a lather of sweat.

Up to this point, speech between the three had been limited to the barest necessities, and Tolman's only sight of the girl had been the fleeting glimpse of her hooded figure which he had obtained as he assisted her into the vehicle and the infrequent glances which he could spare from his driving. For the rest there had been but the dim outlook ahead, the quick response of the young mules to his touch on the reins, and the vague, shifting panorama formed by the gray and passing fields, the shadowy woods, and the long lines of zig-zag fencing. Now, however, they were approaching a danger point. Below them, commanding alike the road and the river, lay Sulphur Rock—a town careful of its trade and of the lives of its inhabitants. Was it likely that they could pass this unchallenged? Tolman knew that they could not.

He was revolving the problem in his mind when the Judge coughed sharply and spoke.

"We are too late, Doctor," he remarked. "Within three miles we'll strike men out from the Rock. If we don't, the people there are fools."

Tolman nodded. "The men'll be there," he replied.

Evelyn leaned forward and plucked at the physician's sleeve. "Perhaps if we

explained to them, you being a doctor—" she began.

But the Judge had seen a fever panic before, therefore, he interrupted her.

"Explain the—" he began explosively, but he caught himself in time. "They'll explain to us across the muzzle of a shotgun!" he concluded.

Tolman knitted his brows.

"Judge," he inquired, "isn't there a road hereabout that leads to the river bank?"

"Yes," answered the old man. "Why?"

Tolman, turning his head, caught sight of the girl's white face. "I was thinking," he replied.

Presently a clearing opened in front of them, the gaunt and "deadened" trees looming large against the face of the sky. The Judge pointed with his finger.

"There's a neighborhood road yonder," said he. "It leads west and strikes the stream at the lower sand bluff."

"We'll take that," returned the physician briefly, and a moment later he swung the heads of the team to the right.

Then, the pace being lessened by the dimness of this new way, the girl closed her eyes and rested her head on her father's shoulder, and Tolman found time to reflect. Now, for the first time since their start, fear came upon him. What if he should fail after all? Briefly, he saw outlined the end of the ride—saw the halt, the coarse and wrathful faces of the guard, the swearing and impotent old Judge, and the girl white and cowering. After that would come the return, when, in the eyes of all the world, he, a reputable physician, would be driven back as cattle are driven to the deserted post of his duty. Who would ever believe that he was only taking the old man and the girl through the lines or that he really meant to return?

He looked at Evelyn, and she with a half-smile raised her eyes to his.

"Are you afraid?" he asked.

"Not now," she answered simply, "since you are taking us away."

The moonbeams lighted her face and an unholy exultation came upon Tolman. It was he, not Timms, who was serving them in their need.

The Judge, however, was pessimistic.

"We're not out yet," he objected in an audible undertone.

But the memory of the girl's half-smile was in Tolman's heart and he pressed his elbow against the revolver that was hidden beneath his coat.

"We are going out!" he answered grimly.

The trees grew thinner and the mules quickened their pace; then the "carryall" lurched forward and came to a sudden stop. Before them was a sharp declivity, beyond all robed in silver mist lay the broad, fair face of the stream.

Tolman descended and began to unharness the team. It was evident that all land routes were hopeless and that his only chance lay with the river. To find a boat would not be difficult, he thought—surely there was no mile of the stream without its fisherman's skiff—but he needed to have knowledge of his adversaries—of the location and the strength of that long, thin line of quarantine pickets stretched somewhere beyond the swamps below.

"What now?" asked the Judge, when he had tethered the mules and approached the carryall again.

"I must leave you a bit," he announced, "I've got to find a way, you see."

The Judge groaned wearily. The situation was palling upon him and the fever seemed preferable. The girl looked fit and composed.

"Do just as you think best," she answered, as Tolman shifted his glance to her.

He dragged a laprobe from beneath a seat and spread it over her knees. "I've got to go down and locate the enemy," he continued with a feeble attempt at jocularity.

She made no answer—there seemed no need of any—but Tolman had looked into her face and he was satisfied. In the next moment he had turned and was skirting the edge of the stream.

At first the footing was good, then the hard sand of the bars gave place to mud and rushes and a thick growth of tangled cane. Into the undergrowth he made his way painfully, the long grass clogging his feet, the sharp cane leaves rasping his face and his hands. Once he tripped



DRAWN BY HOWARD V. BROWN

"There existed for him but the woman, the river and the night." See page 636

over a fallen log, then he recovered himself and pushed onward. Presently he emerged and to his right, through a furrow-like opening in the cane, he saw the tops of the western trees and the gray gleam of the swirling water. He had come upon a path—at its end lay a boat, no doubt.

Even as his brain formulated the thought, his foot struck a chain, and, pulling on this, he brought a skiff into view—a narrow, log dugout, but buoyant and sufficient. Securing his prize more firmly, he turned with renewed vigor to his contest with the darkness and the swamp. He found the cane thicker now. Its leaves harassed him pitilessly, and its stems bent by the winds, and the rains lay treacherously over bogholes and stagnant pools, banked themselves into impene-

trable masses, or else arched high above his head and shut out the sight of the sky. Now and then he gained the respite of an open spot where sickly blackgums stood amid tufts of rushes, and dead oaks upreared themselves from whose thin, bare branches and leprous trunks the loose bark was slowly scaling.

On and on—a serpent writhed beneath his feet and he leaped to avoid the quick backstroke of the squirming, deadly thing—and on and on. Never once did he dare to lose from his ears the low, soft swirl of the guiding stream, never once did he heed the rustle and theplash of the wild things clearing his path. Presently the swamp seemed to end and he came to opener ground with cattle paths leading through. To his right was the river, to

his left the woods, thinned out, and he saw the white line of a road.

He went forward more cautiously—a tiny spark began to glow in the distance, then another and another. He crept from tree trunk to tree trunk, stopped, looked and looked again. The sparks were watch-fires—he had reached the line of the guards.

From his shelter in the underbrush, he counted the stations. Across the river there were other fires, and at one point where a low sand bar extended far out into the water, he could dimly discern the figure of a watcher and the glint of the moonlight on his gun. As softly as he could he turned about and began to retrace his steps. There was need for haste, too, for the gibbous moon was at the zenith and the summer night was almost gone.

When he was out of earshot he ran. He was tired, the undergrowth had whipped his garments to shreds and the cane-blades had cut into his flesh, but he could not linger. At one time he stopped to drink, at another he almost lost himself as he made a detour about a fallen log, but at last when endurance seemed almost at an end, he reached the path and the boat.

Loosing the chain and stepping in, he bathed his face in the cool, clear water, then he took up the paddle and shot the little craft out from the shadow of the bank.

When he had accomplished the distance and had come again to the bluff, the girl gave a cry of relief and the mules greeted him with brayings, but he had no time to lose. Cutting the animals free that they might find their way to the stables where they belonged, he outlined briefly the whole situation to the Judge. Then, while his charges seated themselves in the skiff, he disappeared for a moment in the neighboring brushwood and presently returned with a large, leafy branch. Attaching this to the stern of the canoe and giving no answer to the puzzled question that was in the Judge's eyes, he stepped on board and with one powerful thrust sent boat, cargo and tow gliding toward the center of the stream.

As the current gripped the craft it quivered, heeled to the thrust, and righted

itself, then gathering momentum, it slipped away, leaving the starting point far behind.

Using the paddle alternately as scull and rudder, Tolman settled himself and leaned back luxuriously. How good it was to rest, how glorious was the night and the tremulous motion! Here beyond the slow backset of the eddies there was no mist, no clinging shadows. And the girl was before him, the light breeze rippling through her hair and her face half-turned to look at him. For a moment he forgot the presence of the Judge—forgot the guards and the fever. In the whole world there existed for him but the woman and the river and the night.

An exclamation from Evelyn aroused him. "See," she said, raising her hand, "a light!" His nerves grew tense again and his eyes caught the glare of the fires.

The Judge glanced backward. "Well?" he inquired.

Tolman drew the floating bough to his hand. "We must lie down and cover with this," he replied, "—it is the only way."

He set himself to fasten the paddle so that it would act as a rudder and when this was accomplished and the whole party had disposed themselves, he drew the bough carefully across the rounded sides of the log canoe. In the faint moonlight the dugout had become a floating tree trunk, lying low and drifting down.

At the projecting sand bar, however, the watcher shaded his eyes and regarded it critically. Then, apparently satisfied, he turned to his fellows.

"River's a risin'," he called. "I see ther loose bresh afloatin' out."

"Where?"

The question was short, sharp, and insistent, and Tolman's heart leaped to his throat.

"Thar—ter ther right. Oh, hit's bresh all right enough!"

It was the crucial moment for the fugitives. They dared not stir nor could they see, but they knew, nevertheless, that out at the edge of the sand where the low-voiced ripples were breaking, there were keen eyes fastened upon them by men who were ready to shoot. The girl shivered under the nervous strain, bit her

lips, and reached forth a trembling hand. The hand found another and gripped it convulsively, but that other was not the Judge's hand—it was Tolman's.

But the voices died away, there came no shot, and the boat controlled by her makeshift rudder, held well to the center of the flow. Then hours seemed to follow. Their cramped limbs grew numb, and the sky above them was their only view and the river took them on and on.

After a long time the Judge stirred and groaned uneasily and Tolman rose and looked. Almost he could have shouted, for the town was safely past and the boat was drifting rapidly around a wooded bend.

"Safe!" he said, as he loosed his paddle.

"A few miles below we'll land somewhere and get breakfast."

The Judge laughed aloud and the girl clapped her hands exultantly. Tolman bent to his stroke.

The drowsy afternoon had come. The white dust of the broad, straight road leading North and West rose in little eddying columns, and the jarflies in the wayside bushes voiced an insistent monotone. From his seat in the wagon that had brought him out of the "bottoms" and was now mounting the ridges that served as a foretaste of the coming hills, the Judge regarded approvingly the lean and bearded countryman who for a very considerable price had sheltered and fed, and was at present transporting them.

"And so the two roads connect?" he continued.

"Yas," replied the man, wallowing his tobacco in his cheek, "ther Sulphur Rock road—this is hit we is on—hit b'ars ter ther Nawth an' jines ther Duvallst'n pike jest about a mile furder on. You-uns needn't be afearde none though—we air not agwine noways anigh that thar yaller fever fer Duvallst'n lays full twenty mile back thar acrost them yander bottoms. We turns ter ther left when we jines ther pike, an' right at ther top o' ther nex' rise you kin make out ther tops o' them thar mountings whar you-uns is a wantin' ter go.—Naw, hit aint no 'cashun ter be feared none. They is done shet Duvallst'n plum up wi' a quarantine an'

sence they is done hit ther rest o' ther country is open. They 'lows, they does, 'at they kin keep yaller jack f'm spreadin' now."

Tolman could understand this. The stricken sections had evidently been isolated, but in the outer country travelers might come and go as they would. As for himself, now that his task was accomplished, a sudden infirmity of purpose had beset him. The Judge, without a question, had seemed to take it for granted that he would keep on with them, and all day Evelyn had been talking to him of the hills, the far blue summits and the long stretches of the purple valley-land, and of the many little pleasures which they together might enjoy there, and he had suffered her to talk.

And now the time drew near when he must decide. Yesterday he would have scoffed at the idea that there were any two courses open to him, but it all seemed different to-day. What, after all, was Duvallstown to him; what had the village ever done for him? Was not Cameron there, and Timms? Why, when happiness seemed just in his grasp, should he give up the prospect for Duvallstown and fever, and even death, perhaps? He looked at Evelyn and she returned his glance. Never before had he been able to draw so close to her as he had in this last day and night; never had she seemed before more utterly desirable.

He set his teeth. He would give up nothing—he would go to the hills with her.

The wagon climbed a long slope, another road revealed itself, and the driver pointed with his whip.

"Duvallst'n is thar," he remarked, "an' yonder—"

The girl lifted up her head. "The mountains!" she cried. "I can see the blue peaks and the gaps!"

Presently a carriage that was rounding a curve on the other road attracted their attention. There was a smart-looking driver on the box and beside him sat another figure that somehow seemed familiar.

The Judge broke the silence first. "Why, it's Timms!" he ejaculated.

When the carriage had finally over-



DRAWN BY HOWARD V. BROWN

"Tramping steadily along the gray road."

taken them, Timms greeted them effusively.

"I knew you'd get out," he exclaimed. "I crossed the river at the very first news—but suppose we join forces. My vehicle, it seems, is a shade the better of the two."

The Judge agreed with Timms and was glad to make the exchange, but a sudden revulsion swept over Tolman. So Timms was here and Cameron was yonder—alone—Cameron, the bald-headed old hero who was man enough to stick to his post! After the Judge and Evelyn had been transferred, Tolman slid stiffly from the wagon to a footing in the dusty road.

"Come, get in, doctor," admonished Timms impatiently. "There's plenty of room for us all."

Tolman shook his head. "Thank you," he replied, "but—I'm overdue yonder with Cameron. I'm going no further, I believe."

The girl's face went suddenly white; then she recovered herself and laughed.

"You can't go back," she remarked. "The guards will refuse to let you in."

"No trouble for a doctor to get in," growled the Judge. "They'll need 'em pretty badly in there."

Timms glanced at Evelyn and shuffled from foot to foot. "Well—" he said finally. "Well—"

Tolman's good-byes hid the confusion of the man, but when next Evelyn spoke to Timms there was a catch in her throat and a faint, queer inflection in her voice, such as Timms very seldom had heard.

"You—" she said, "you wouldn't do such a foolish thing as that?"

Timms did not answer, but climbed briskly to the driving seat. The girl clasped her hands, leaned out of the carriage, and looked back toward the "bottoms." Tolman was tramping steadily along the gray road to Duvallstown—it is a pity he did not learn until much later the message of her eyes. Timms did not know either just then—but Timms did not count.

The Janitor

BY WILLIAM HAMILTON OSBORNE

The conservative, old-fashioned president of the conservative, old-fashioned Beef & Tallow National Bank of New York, held up his hands in holy horror. He had just stepped from his conservative and old-fashioned equipage, only to confront a line of some two hundred men, who completely occupied the space in front of the Beef & Tallow building.

"Thunder!" he exclaimed. He looked helplessly about him. At that instant he caught sight of the cashier swinging down Nassau street toward him. It was about half past nine on a Monday morning.

The cashier grinned. "Run on the bank, eh?" he remarked to the president. The president shook his head.

"I—I didn't expect anything like this," he said. "Twenty years ago when we were looking for our last janitor, we couldn't scare up a corporal's guard."

The cashier familiarly tapped the old gentleman on the arm. "Mr. Ougheltree," he said, "if you'd done what I told you to do, you wouldn't have had this trouble. All you had to do was to tell these fellows to write you at the newspaper office, and then you could have taken your pick, and that would have been all. But," he added, "you'll never take advice."

The president shook his head. "I—I want to see them—all of them," he answered. It was characteristic of the old man. He never delegated any important duty. Conservative and old-fashioned he was, he held his finger, ever, upon each detail in the business of the bank.

"And now," he told the cashier, "that Jenkinson, our janitor, is dead, I'm going to see that we get a man as good as he—for it's a very important thing."

The cashier laughed. "I wish you joy," he said, waving his hand toward the line of men. Then he ran lightly up the high stoop and disappeared into the bank.

Ougheltree, the president, was possessed of a little penchant, an idiosyncrasy,

that the others in the bank were wont to laugh at. He believed that a man's character was written on his face. He relied upon recommendation, it is true, but a man's appearance had the last word with him. And, in justice to him, be it said, that he rarely was mistaken.

"What's in a recommendation?" he would ask his associates; "there's not a business house here in town that won't give a recommendation of the most extravagant kind to any employe short of a liar and a thief." He was right. Like a letter of introduction, one of recommendation is too easily obtained. And so certain was the president as to the kind of man he wanted as janitor of the Beef & Tallow Bank building, that before noon he had placed his finger upon Hackett, one of those in line; a young man, thirty-five years of age, broad shouldered, strong, intelligent, and, apparently, efficient above the average of men in office building janitor-dom.

At one o'clock, as Peters, the cashier, was making ready for his lunch, the president called to him.

"This," said President Ougheltree to Peters, the cashier, with a gesture toward Hackett, "is our new janitor, William Hackett."

Later in the afternoon the president again approached the cashier. "What did you think of my choice?" he asked.

The cashier shook his head. Unlike the president, he had met men outside of the bank, the church, and the prayer meeting.

"He's all right," he answered, nodding his head, "but there's something about him that makes me think that he's a sport. I don't know what it is."

"He's not a sport," returned the president, "I'm sure of that."

And so William Hackett, the new janitor, started in. He was efficient; there was no doubt about that. And he was modern, too, in his methods. Out of a dingy old building, he seemed determined

to make one that was up-to-date, so far as the making lay in his power. And his first step was to discharge all the male help about the place, and employ hard-working, middle-aged women to do the cleaning up. And he seemed to hold his nose to the grindstone. He was not a sport—that much seemed certain. And for a month or so everything went well.

One day young Johnny Montgomery, a young clerk who was fast working his way up toward the assistant paying tellership, found that he was the first man at the bank. He had a balance that had kept him up the night before and which was still his master. The front door to the bank was closed, and he rang the bell. It was answered by a young woman who seemed to Johnny Montgomery to be almost a mere slip of a girl. She nodded pleasantly to him and smiled.

"It's—Mr. Montgomery," she said. Johnny gasped. He did not remember ever seeing her; yet she had his name down as pat as if she had known him all his life. He strode to his desk, pulling off his coat as he went along, and the young woman proceeded with her task. She was dusting and cleaning, and in the course of her work she reached Montgomery's desk.

"The janitor," she explained, "usually cleans out the bank himself, but," she added, flushing, "he's not so very well today. He didn't want to trust the regular help. And so," she concluded, "I thought I'd fix it up myself."

Montgomery nodded mechanically. He remembered vaguely that the president had cautioned Hackett about letting promiscuous help inside the banking room itself. But Montgomery wasn't thinking hard about it. He was engaged in looking at the girl who stood before him.

"She—she's a beauty," he whispered to himself.

He was right. He couldn't figure out just how she might look in a street costume, but he knew that with the collar of her working shirtwaist turned in, showing her neck, and with the sleeves of her shirtwaist turned up, exposing her arms, she far surpassed in looks many women whom he had seen.

"She's a beauty," he kept repeating, "and—a lady," he acknowledged to himself. And, as young Johnny Montgomery was a gentleman, he made no effort to attract her attention, but buried his face in his work, and contented himself with an occasional glance at her as she worked. The next day he found himself hurrying unconsciously through his breakfast, and once more early at the bank. He didn't analyze his feelings too much. He told himself merely that he wanted to see this girl again—janitor's help as she was. He saw her that morning and the next, in the same way. Johnny Montgomery was a handsome lad, with a fine fresh face, and a wonderfully bright eye; and deep within his consciousness there was implanted an ever-increasing, ever-growing admiration for the beautiful in women. Johnny told himself that some day, when he married, he must pick out the very prettiest girl that he could find. And so, although his quest had not yet begun—his salary was still below the standard—he found himself bowing unconsciously at the shrine of every beauty, high and low, who came across his path. And this girl of the janitor's crew at the Beef & Tallow Bank, was a superb sample of a certain type, and her beauty pleased him more than he was willing to confess. He even had to approach Peters, the cashier, on the subject.

"Have you seen the girl," he asked of Peters, "who cleans out the bank? You ought to. She's a little beauty."

"No," answered Peters, indifferently, "but I saw Castiglioni last night at the Gascony. Frenchy—well, I guess. High cheek bones. And if she can't move her feet—! Say, Johnny, you don't want to miss it."

Johnny shook his head. He went back. He thought afterwards that it wasn't just right for him to mention the girl to Peters.

And so he kept his counsel. But after a week or so, he saw no more of her.

It was probably six weeks after that when Ougheltree, the president, came down to the bank on a holiday—a trick he sometimes had. And he, too, met the girl with the down-turned collar and the upturned sleeves. He seemed surprised,



DRAWN BY EDGAR BERT SMITH

"William Hackett, the new janitor, was modern in his methods."

but nodded gravely, and asked for Hackett. The young woman hesitated.

"He's away—to-day," she answered, flushing, "a—a holiday, you see. He works so hard on other days. And I am doing just a little bit myself."

Ougheltree subsided. But on the following Monday he sent for Hackett and Hackett came. Hackett was pale and distraught. Ougheltree did not notice that he was trembling nervously from head to foot.



DRAWN BY EDGAR BERT SMITH

"The girl with the upturned sleeves."

"Hackett," he said, "I came down here Saturday, and found one of your women cleaning up. Here in the bank, understand. You know I suggested to you that you'd better be careful who gets in the bank itself, because you never can tell whom to trust and whom not. I suppose you can trust this young woman, but I thought I'd just tell you to be careful about it. That's all."

Hackett smiled. "I guess I can trust the young woman," he answered. "That's

Mrs. Hackett—" he added proudly—"that's just my wife."

Ougheltree rose and held out his hand.

"Dear me, Hackett!" he exclaimed, "then it's all right. And I congratulate you upon your wife. I take it all back. I thought she was merely one of the help—that's all. You can go, Hackett."

But Hackett lingered.

"I—I wanted you to know, Mr. Ougheltree," he said, "that it's she who cooks the lunches that you and the V. P. and Mr. Peters and the others have to eat."

Ougheltree beamed. "Then I congratulate you, doubly, Hackett, upon your wife. For I tell my family that I am getting better cooking at the bank than I get at home. I'm glad, Hackett, to know about your wife."

And again, for a long while, things went on smoothly. The wheels of the janitor's machine seemed to move evenly, and noiselessly, and so well that the janitor himself was rarely seen.

One day, Ougheltree, the president, called Peters into his private office.

"Peters," he said. "I'm in a quandary. Our business is growing and we need—we really need more help. But I want to keep down expenses. I've been studying the methods of other banks, and I think I've learned just how to get the most, in reason, out of every man we've got. What we want, is to save time. Now, if you'll listen a bit, I'll tell you what I think, and I don't mind saying, either, that it's Hackett and his wife that put it into my head. Now, see!"

The cashier listened closely. At the end he nodded convincingly.

"It's just what the other banks are doing, sir," he said, "and for the matter of that, you and I and the V. P. do it right along. And you're dead right when you say it'll save a lot of time."

"Then," returned the president, "send Johnny Montgomery up for Hackett and his wife, and I'll tell 'em all about it."

Johnny went up and brought them down. Johnny had found out some time since that his beauty was the janitor's wife; and he had, therefore, felt it safe and proper to chat with her upon occasion, without restraint. And the more he saw

of her, and the more he saw of Hackett, the more he liked them both.

"The—the Ogre wants to see you," he announced to them. The word "Ogre" was a convenient designation of the president, who was as unlike an ogre as any man might be. Hackett and his wife went down.

"Now, Hackett," said Ougheltree, "I'll tell you just what we've concluded to do. We've got about forty-five people here and we've concluded just to feed 'em every day. We do it to save time. The bank stands for it. If you're agreeable, you can fix up that big room on the top floor, and you can make a regular thing of cooking luncheon every day. You'll have to get more help, but it'll save us money. We'll pay you fifty cents per man, and I don't mind telling you that it's going to save the bank about fifty dollars a day at that. The point is, can you do it? Will you do it? And will you start in right away?"

"The instant," answered Hackett, "that the tables and chairs are bought, I'm ready to go in and win." His young wife nodded. The president caught her eye.

"All this, Hackett," he added, smiling, "is on condition that Mrs. Hackett supervises the cooking of the meals."

The scheme was a good one, but it left out of consideration the health of the bank clerks. However, it had worked well elsewhere, and the bank did save money. Ougheltree, in the presence of the growing business, reorganized his forces, and in the shuffle Johnny Montgomery, the handsome, became one of the assistant paying tellers.

Upstairs on the top floor, young Mrs. Hackett started in, mistress of her art, as she was, to prepare the best fifty cent luncheons she knew how at the least possible expenditure of money. And what she furnished was substantial and dainty as well. It pleased.

"Gee!" said Johnny Montgomery, "I wish that I could change my boarding house, for the fare of the Beef & Tallow Bank." And it was just the way that everybody felt. Good meals—they were good. And only young Mrs. Hackett knew that it was not what the bank men

ate, but the way it was cooked, that made the meals attractive. One day she touched her husband on the arm.

"There's money in this, Billy," she exclaimed. Hackett nodded.

"I know," he responded, "I've been watching this all along."

And then, in the midst of it all, one day the bank found out the ghastly circumstance.

William Hackett, the janitor, was—a drunkard. They found him, supine, upon the stairs. He was not a sport—Peters had been wrong about that—he was a plain, ordinary drunkard. Not the kind of man who drinks every day; but the sort who drinks heavily, terrifically, terribly, every month—every six weeks. His was the American vice—the habit of the spree.

Hackett was a good janitor. But for this vice he would have been a good manager of a large mercantile business. He had been young and ambitious, faithful and industrious. He might have worked his way to the top of the ladder. He was attractive—attractive enough to gain the affection of a very worthy young woman. And she had married him—without knowing. And then, she had gritted her teeth, and borne it. She had used every means, adopted every measure to save this man from the degradation, the ruin that waited for him out in the future, but without avail. And she realized that in this age and generation there is no place for the man, able though he be, who is sober for a month and drunk for a week. He was an outcast, and she knew it. But it was her self-imposed task to make the very best of the situation that was the very worst. And she had done it, and the bank had never known. But the money that William Hackett had made out of the fifty cent meals of the employes of the bank had given him added reason for neglecting the bank and indulging his vice. And the vice had forced itself into the light of discovery. Theretofore, his young wife had simply taken his place; completed his unfinished tasks; kept the bank in its accustomed order—but now, the bank had found William Hackett out.

It was the day after they found him on

the stairs that he stood, a shaking, nervous wretch, in the presence of President Ougheltree, this time in very truth an ogre; for Ougheltree of the church and week night meetings, had little use for the man with a vice. He spent ten minutes in violent denunciation—to Hackett it seemed like ten hours.

"You can go, Hackett," said the president. Hackett started off; then he came back, and asked, abjectly, for a recommendation.

"I'll have to have it," he said, "to get another job." He did not get it.

"I'm not a liar," thundered Ougheltree. "A recommendation? No."

Hackett went up stairs. And then his young wife crept down and entered the presence of Ougheltree, the president.

"I want to tell you something, Mr. Ougheltree," she said. "You don't know it, and my reason for telling you is because it's true, and because I must live and so must Billy." She stopped a minute. "For six months," she went on, "it is I and not my husband, who has cared for the bank—who has kept it in order. Only three weeks ago you told him that he was doing it better than he had ever done before. It was I—I was doing it. Ever since we have been here, I have done fully half the work. I have seen that things went right. Up to six months ago Billy and I have been your janitor: for three or four months now, it is I alone, and not Billy. I can't ask you to keep Billy on; I will not do it. But we must live—Billy must live. It's come to the time when I've got to see to it that we must live. You know what I've done—you know what I can do. Billy cannot get another decent job." She stopped again, and placed her hand upon the president's arm. "Mr. Ougheltree," she said, "we're going down—down—down—unless you let me stay."

She stayed. Ougheltree investigated her story and found it true. She had done the work; she had managed the help; she had been the janitor of the bank. She stayed. Hackett stayed, too, but not as an employe of the bank. He crept in and out, when all had gone, like a shadow—a man with a deadly vice.

Johnny Montgomery heard about it;

they all heard about it. And Johnny, when he ate his dinner up on the top floor, conveyed to her silently, and as best he could, with those expressive eyes of his, his sympathy. He wanted her to know that he understood. She answered him in the same way; she knew that he did understand; she saw that his was genuine sympathy.

"You work hard," he said to her one day, noting the lines in her young face. She sighed. Then she smiled.

"Hard," she echoed. "Some day," she continued, "I'm going to buy a farm, on the sunny side of a hill, and I'm going to rest, rest, rest. If I ever get the money," she added quickly.

Johnny shook his head.

"Nobody around a bank," he answered, with a bit of hopelessness in his voice, "ever can get together enough of the stuff, even to buy a farm—certainly not enough to rest."

A year passed, and William Hackett died. They all knew of his death; knew how he died, and when and where. And the janitor of the Beef & Tallow Bank laid her head upon her arms and sobbed her way through night after night. For William Hackett was a man who would have been worth while but for one thing—true that she had been wedded to his vice as well as to him; but now, for a time, she remembered only the man. In the day time she forgot everything save that she was janitor of the Beef & Tallow Bank.

Ougheltree, the president, forgot William Hackett; he thought but seldom, even, of the janitor. For the Beef & Tallow Bank was forging steadily and surely to the front. It was still old-fashioned and conservative, but it was wonderfully substantial; and it held a wondrous grip upon metropolitan finance. One day, with an exultant light in his eyes, he beckoned to Peters, the cashier.

"Peters," he exclaimed, once they were in his private room, "what do you think? At last we've got the Battery Bank and Schuman's people at our mercy. They want to consolidate with us—they've got to consolidate with us, and they know it. They'll do anything. We'll retain our name, our men, our president—" he

grinned—"everything. They want to come in, because we've driven them, literally to the wall. And they've got business, too. A whole lot of it, at that."

The cashier's eyes gleamed. "By George, Ougheltree," he answered, sincerely, "you're a wonder, sir, you are."

The consolidation, within a few months, was an accomplished fact, and the Beef & Tallow Bank at last marched in the van. It had to enlarge its quarters and accordingly turned out several old tenants of the Beef & Tallow building. Its office force now numbered one hundred and fifty men. At the head of it all was Ougheltree, still keeping his finger upon details; and the methods of the bank were still his own. Up on the top floor, one hundred and fifty men fed, in relays, every day, in the middle of the day. And young Mrs. Hackett, the janitor, fed them. And she worked and worked and worked.

But even Ougheltree felt that his bank must accommodate itself to the modern conditions; that it must keep up with the march of progress. Conditions in Wall street were changing; money was plentiful and good loans were hard to get. Banks were even speculating in safe business enterprises. But the Beef & Tallow was still conservative.

It was when Ougheltree happened to be confined to his home with pneumonia that a crisis arose in the affairs of the bank. Larchmont, Low & Co. were successful operators on the street, and the bank had been accommodating them with small loans on good security. Other banks hardly asked security—Larchmont's note was deemed as good as gold. Larchmont, Low & Co. constituted a pillar of financial strength. But the Beef & Tallow Bank, in its conservatism, found that business was deserting it; it had plenty of money to loan, but no applicants. Suddenly, Larchmont, Low & Co. swooped down upon it with an application for an enormous slice of ready cash. A directors' meeting was called at once. Ougheltree was very sick; could not even be seen and talked to. Something must be done. There was big money in the loan. The old Battery bank directors and the Schumann crowd, new blood in the Beef

& Tallow Bank, heartily endorsed the loan. Peters shook his head.

"The old man," he protested, "would never take it. I'm pretty sure of that." In their perplexity, they took a vote, and the cash was loaned.

It was two months later that Johnny Montgomery, hurrying along through the halls, was stopped by Mrs. Hackett.

"What's the matter in the bank?" she queried.

Montgomery was breathless. "Haven't



DRAWN BY EDGAR BERT SMITH

"One day the bank found out."

you heard?" he answered. "We've been carrying Larchmont, Low & Co. along for months. They've been bulling the market. We thought they were all right. And now, look!"

He exhibited a "flimsy" from a Wall street newspaper. "They've gone to smash," he said.

Larchmont, Low & Co. were only the first to go. Five other concerns, entangled in the ruins, went also. And then the directors of the Beef & Tallow

held their breath; for the Beef & Tallow had been backing conservative concerns that had turned out to be concerns of quite another calibre. What had seemed gilt-edged was merely tinsel. Old Ougheltree, recovered of his illness, gritted his teeth.

"Fools!" he screamed. But this did no good; nor did it do good for Peters, the cashier, to shake his head, and murmur, "I told you so."

The ruin had been accomplished, and one bright day the Beef & Tallow found its doors besieged by a crowd of clamorous people.

"By George!" said Peters, "this crowd isn't looking for a job this trip. This is something different, this thing is."

He was right. For a time the Beef & Tallow laughed; and New York laughed with it.

"The old Beef & Tallow," people said, "you might as well try to exhaust the United States Treasury as to drain that bank."

But they forgot that there had been times when the United States Treasury had been drained; and they did not know that the turn of the Beef & Tallow Bank had come. The run was a steady run, and on the third day, the failure of another Wall street house doubled the crowd that stood in line before the Beef & Tallow building.

Johnny Montgomery's face was pale that day as he sat down in his accustomed place in the dining room. He saw young Mrs. Hackett and he beckoned to her.

"We're up against it down stairs," he said. "We'll go under. I don't see how we can weather it."

"Is it so bad?" asked Mrs. Hackett.

"Let me tell you," exclaimed Johnny, hastily swallowing a cup of coffee, "Ougheltree has put up everything he's got; Schumann has done the same; and Willard of the old Battery said he'd sell his shirt before he saw the bank go under. They've got one chance. It's New Haven; the New York banks won't lift a finger; they'd just as lief we'd go, you know. But New Haven promises that tomorrow—not to-day, but to-morrow—it can do something for us. Peters knows

about it; he says that we can pull through with New Haven's aid, provided we can weather the storm this afternoon. But—hang it!—this afternoon—why, it's only twelve, and all New York is down stairs at our doors."

Young Mrs. Hackett thought for an instant—plainly she was revolving something in her mind.

"What do you *think*, Johnny," she inquired.

Montgomery nodded. "I—think," he answered, "that we'll just miss pulling through this afternoon. That's what I think. It's got me scared to death. Every fellow in the bank is thinking of his job—and you bet there'll be wailing and gnashing of teeth to-morrow if—"

Mrs. Hackett stopped him.

"I forgot," she said, "about the fellows and—and you—losing their jobs." She touched him lightly on the arm.

"Johnny," she said, "listen. I can get some money—no matter how, I know—men who have it. No matter about that. Tell Peters if he needs ten, twenty thousand—and enough to tide over, I can—"

But Johnny Montgomery had paled once more. "What—men?" he asked. Then he flushed. "No, no," he continued, "I don't mean that—it's none of my business. I'll tell Peters."

He strode away. He told Peters. At half past two that afternoon Peters walked to a little speaking tube and pressed a button. Two minutes later young Mrs. Hackett walked up to the receiving tellers' window, and laid down a bulky envelope or two.

"I want to open an account," she said. The teller gasped. Then he reached for the envelopes and began to count. Johnny Montgomery watched him.

"Thirty-one thousand, three hundred and sixty dollars," announced the receiving teller, "and whose name?"

"Thirty-one thousand!" thought Johnny to himself.

"Who deposits this, Mrs. Hackett?" queried the receiving teller.

"I do," answered the janitress, "my first name is—Louise."

The teller nodded, passed the bills surreptitiously to a clerk and the clerk passed them surreptitiously to Johnny

Montgomery, who turned them over to the paying teller.

At three o'clock, when the doors were closed, the Beef & Tallow Bank had in its coffers just nine thousand odd dollars, and no more.

"By George!" said Peters, "that cash of Mrs. Hackett's friend just made us square. Call up New Haven right away."

They called up New Haven six times that afternoon, and four times the next morning, and at a quarter to ten next day New Haven, by its representative, turned up at the bank with cash in plenty—and the run was over.

"Your friend," said Johnny Montgomery, doubtfully, to young Mrs. Hackett, "was a brick to put up all that money just at that time." He stopped and his face grew red. "Look here," he went on bluntly, "it's none of my darned business—none at all; but, I want to tell you—I want to know who your friend is."

Mrs. Hackett smiled.

"Johnny," she said, "if you fed two hundred men at fifty cents a head, how much would that be a day?"

"What's that got to do with it?" answered Johnny.

"It would be a hundred dollars," went on Mrs. Hackett, "and if it only cost you fifty dollars to feed them, how much would be the profit? How much, Johnny?"

"That," protested Johnny, "is

DRAWN BY EDGAR BERT SMITH

"Young Mrs. Hackett was mistress of her art."

not what I'm trying to get at."

"And," proceeded the janitor, "if that goes on for a year or two years, with more or less men, how much do you think it would be? There! Now I've told you all about it. And the bank never knew, and never saw, and never understood to this day—but *you* see, don't you, Johnny?"

Johnny put his hand to his head, and tried to reason it all out. He was muddled just a bit. But finally he *saw*.



"Thunderation!" he cried at last. "You don't mean to say that all that money was *your* money?"

"Every bit of it," she answered. "It was hard, Johnny, to risk it, after the hard work I've had earning it, but I thought of Ougheltree, and the boys, and their salaries, and—I did it. I've kept it 'way up here all these years. I thought it would be safer, don't you see. But I've made it, Johnny, every bit of it, out of the meals. Listen, and I'll tell you all about it."

At the end of her recital Johnny gasped. "Why," he exclaimed, "you're making more per year than—Peters. Why, see here, why don't you retire and buy that farm, and go over there and rest? You said you'd do it. Why don't you?"

Mrs. Hackett did not answer for a moment. And when she spoke, there was a little catch in her voice.

"I don't know," she answered. "I suppose I like to make money, and I'm attached to the bank, and all the boys, and—I don't know. Somehow, it doesn't seem that I can do it."

If Johnny had looked up just then—but he didn't. He sighed.

"Jove!" he went on. "You're lucky!" He waved his hand. "I've got to get back—to the bank." And then he went.

"Johnny is tired," said the janitor. of the bank.

But her farm and her rest came before she wanted it. Ougheltree died. And Schumann stepped into his shoes. And Schumann decreed several changes. The first of these was a new office building. And the bank had suddenly realized the money that there was in the feeding line. *

"Hereafter," said Schumann, "the bank will employ a *chef* on a salary. Mrs. Hackett," he inquired, "will you take the job?"

But the young janitor only laughed.

"I'm too old-fashioned," she answered, "to be a *chef*. And, besides," she added, "I'm too tired. And now, I'm going to rest."

She bought a farm, and rested, and the bank forgot her. And the bank built its new building, and then started in to

double the task of every man in its employ. Upon the shoulders of Johnny Montgomery, for instance, it placed a burden under which he positively staggered.

"I wish I could get time," Johnny told himself, "just to rest up a bit." But Johnny worked, and the others worked, and every day at noon they went up stairs and ate food which was as far removed from the delicacies of Mrs. Hackett as the east is from the west; and Johnny's constitution fought a fight with the food and the confined air of the bank—and he worked, worked, worked. And one day he was ill, and went home, and got up from a sick bed the next morning and came down to the bank. That was months after Mrs. Hackett had gone. And in the midst of it all, she dropped into the bank one day, and they shook hands all around, with her, for she was an universal favorite. But she didn't see Johnny. He was cooped in a narrow, little room all by himself. Finally she stepped into the reception room and asked for him, and they sent for him. She was shocked to see him. His face had deep lines in it, and he had lost the buoyant, boyish look that had graced him once.

"What's the matter?" she asked.

"I don't know," answered he, briskly enough, "I'm tired, I guess."

"Sick," she ventured.

"N—no," answered Johnny, "only tired. Tired as—thunder!"

"I don't have to ask," he went on, "how you are. You've rested, I guess. I can see that." For she was as young, apparently, as she had been six years before, when he had seen her with down-turned collar and upturned sleeves.

"I am a business woman," she went on, "and I'm here to see you. There's a little bit of a bank over in the village, but it seems to be a paying enterprise. I've put my money into it, Johnny—what I had."

Johnny smiled. "You had enough," he answered.

"I want to know," she went on, flushing slightly, "I want to know whether you can come out and run it for me. It needs a man to run it. Out there they laugh at



DRAWN BY EDGAR BERT SMITH

"Mrs. Hackett asked for Johnny, and they sent for him."



DRAWN BY EDGAR BERT SMITH

"Life begins now," repeated John Montgomery."

a woman who tries to do anything but—cook."

Johnny Montgomery drew his breath sharply inward.

"I'd like to run it—I'd like to see it. When can I—do you think?"

Next Sunday he went out to the little Jersey town. Young Mrs. Hackett had spoken truth. There was the bank—there was the little farm. There was one

of Mrs. Hackett's dinners. There was—rest.

And there, above all things else, so Johnny told himself, was Mrs. Hackett. And then, suddenly, there rose to the surface the feeling that for years Johnny Montgomery had been fighting down; fighting down for many reasons at the start, fighting down later because he was nobody but Johnny Montgomery, with a small salary in a big bank. All these years he had kept his face, his glance, averted from the eyes of this woman, who still was nothing but a girl to him—he had never forgotten the down-turned collar and the up-turned sleeves. And he stood there, on the small veranda, on that Sunday afternoon, and he knew that there was but one thing worth while in all the material world, and that, beside it, salaries, and banks and business paled into insignificance.

They were standing, he and she, looking down into the valley with the afternoon sun upon their faces. He felt new life coursing in his veins. He felt—

He turned to her suddenly, and without a word, gathered her into his arms.

"I'm not going to ask you anything," he blurted out, "I'm only going to tell you what we both know—that we must go on hand in hand, from now. We've been

fools, ever to keep apart. I don't know why we ever stayed apart—how we ever could. I can see it all now. The thing that worried me was not how much I thought of you, but how much you cared. I know now—I know that all you did for the bank, all that you did for the boys—all the time you spent there, working day after day, when you didn't have to, was meant, not for me, not because you loved me, not because I loved you, but because—because we loved each other. It's all going to end right here—all the uncertainty. And it's all going to begin right here—life, real life. Life for you and for me."

He kissed her suddenly, warmly, upon the lips. Her hand stole up and rested on his shoulder.

"Johnny," she whispered. They stood there—hysterical—forgetful—oblivious.

The dusk came on. It was autumn.

"Life begins—*now*," repeated John Montgomery. He took her by the hand, and led her down the little private lane that turned into the road. Side by side they went, down the village road, and turned in at the path that led into a house standing next door to the village church. A man in a long frock coat opened to them. He was the pastor of the Donaldson First Church.

The President's Tree

BY EDMUND MITCHELL.

"Children, as is our usual custom on the glorious Fourth of July, we gather around the President's Tree, to refresh our souls with the lofty and inspiring sentiment for which it stands. Twenty years ago the President of our country came to this town, then a little village, and, planting the tree which was to commemorate his visit, gave us God speed—bade us go ahead and do the right, make the place a place of happy homes, a model municipality, the pride of an industrious, progressive, and law-abiding community."

The speaker was putting forth no attempt at spell-binding rhetoric, but, although his method of delivery was the quiet conversational one of friend addressing a gathering of friends, the audience hung upon his every word with rapt attention. A man of middle age, he was standing beneath the boughs of a sturdy young oak, hat in hand, the soft summer breeze playing with his hair. Gathered about him was a group of children, girls and boys, dressed in their best, most of them carrying tiny flags. Fringing the throng were as many elders as youngsters, the fathers and mothers, the grown-up sisters and brothers; here and there a venerable figure, grand-

father leaning on his cane, grandmother beside the baby carriage wherein some infant patriot gurgled with complacent enthusiasm.

Had a census enumerator been afoot, he might have filled up his sheets without more ado. For obviously all the town was assembled round the famous President's Tree, which, as the speaker had indicated, served as a rallying point when the communal spirit stirred.

"Not all of you know the full meaning of the change that twenty years have wrought," continued the orator. "But we who have been here from the first can recall the wilderness which we set our hearts to conquer, the scrub amidst which coyotes used to skulk where our beautiful town now stands; the arid plains to which we have brought water, and which we have made our gardens and our cornfields. Twenty years ago, a desert; to-day—well, gaze around, and see for yourselves."

The speaker lifted his eyes from the children whom he had been more particularly addressing, and swept the view before him. The pause gave the youngsters an opportunity for cheering and flag-waving, but the elders, half turning round, involuntarily followed the sug-

gestion given and the example set them. With well satisfied looks and commendatory murmurs they surveyed the truly charming park, its shrub-embowered lake glinting in the sunshine, amidst the greenery the occasional white gleam of statuary, here an avenue of noble trees merging into a broad street of residences, there the vista closed by a columned facade which proclaimed itself as belonging to municipal hall or library or art gallery; beyond, picturesquely breaking the skyline, a clock tower, a dome, a tapering church spire, each the emblem of some interest, pleasure, or aspiration held in common by these home-builders in the wilderness.

"A dinky little place, ain't it?" called out a voice in the crowd.

The crowd laughed; the orator smiled—a smile of wonderful gentleness and sweetness. He raised his hand, and the spell of silent, eager harkening once more held his audience.

"In my closing sentences I just want to say one thing. Remember the man who planted this tree. I do not refer to the greatness which, in full or in too scanty measure, the world may have given or denied. I do not speak of the President of the United States—I speak of the plain, simple man who stood here, and, in kindness of heart for all of us, his fellow citizens, planted the sapling that has now grown to be this splendid oak. Think of that man as one of ourselves, and never forget that he was noble and generous, filled with deep affection for those around him, unselfish in serving the common good, unsparing of time or trouble when the happiness of others was concerned, letting wealth go past him which his indefatigable energies might have reaped with consummate ease. That is the story the President's Tree stands to tell"—he patted the stem with affectionate pride—"and never forget it, girls and boys. Now, off you go, and unpack the lunch baskets around the lake."

With a whoop the crowd of youngsters scattered like shaken rose petals. The elders dispersed more slowly, some of them pausing to say a few words to the man who had spoken—to shake his hand,

to exchange a word of reminiscence, to give that look into the eyes which, in fullness of emotion, tells more than words. But at last the President's Tree was deserted; even the clergyman—he was clearly the pastor of the town, although there was nothing in his dress to proclaim the fact—was wending his way towards the groves around the lake, now resounding with happy shouts and merry laughter.

He had sauntered only a dozen yards when a man came up behind, and with detaining hand touched his shoulder. A garden seat sheltered by bushes was close by. This the newcomer indicated.

"Bishop, I want to speak to you. Let us rest here awhile."

"All right, Mr. Mayor; I'm at your service."

After they had sat down, back to the parson's face came that peculiar smile of sweetness, mingled now with drollery. He opened the colloquy.

"What's up, Mayor? You look as if you were upset over something."

"I am upset. Every word you spoke under that tree went straight to my heart."

"I meant it that way. I hope my words went straight to the hearts of all my listeners."

"But, Bishop, you looked at me, too, when you were speaking."

"Did I?" There was amused non-committal in the query. "And what of that?"

"You awakened old memories."

"My mind was full of old memories. Do you remember that day, Ellis, when the President came to our town?"

"Remember! Could I ever forget it?"

"All the settlers swarmed in from a hundred miles around. And the wonderful music of that scratch brass band! I can hear it sometimes yet in troubled dreams. You were marshal of the ceremonies, and went prancing around on a big black horse, with a ribbon on your breast as broad as a shingle."

Both men leaned back, and laughed quietly.

"It was a great day, Bishop," said the Mayor, with lingering appreciation. "And the President chatted that affable with all of us. Don't you remember he

came into my house—the house that's our barn now—and pinched Selina by the ear? Selina was the baby then, and I can see her yet, as she sat up laughing and crowing to the great man, just as happy as a clam."

"Yes, the President left more behind him than the tree he planted. He left pleasant memories and stimulating ideas. It was his visit that set you and me thinking, Ellis, and we resolved to build a town beautiful. It might be small, but it would be beautiful, helping thereby to make the lives of those dwelling in it beautiful. You remember that is what we said, Mayor?"

"*You* said it, Bishop. You got the lesson out of the visit, so to speak, and kind o' enthused me with it. The making of our town has been yours, my friend. God bless you!"

The Mayor's hand had gone out, and clutched the lapel of the parson's coat. There was the glisten of moisture in his eyes—the quiver of deep feeling on his face. It was a fine face—not refined, but strong, rugged, open, honest as the day.

"No, no, Mayor," protested the parson, gently disengaging the other's hold. Their hands met, and clasped as they descended. "Yours has been all the work, and yours is all the honor. I may have suggested, but you have toiled and accomplished. We made you our first mayor, and have kept you in office and in harness ever since."

"Just as we dubbed you Bishop, and call you Bishop to this day—the leader of our town towards everything that has made it good and pleasant to live in. I ain't highly educated like you, but I can see that it is the man who inspires that does the work—not the man who merely handles the job."

"That is so," laughed the parson. "But it has been your actual work, Mayor, that has kept on inspiring all of us. So together we have done what we have done, with you ever bearing the burden and heat of the day. That's what I meant when I told the children never to forget how noble and estimable is a life of unselfish devotion to one's fellow beings."

"But all that was about the man who planted the tree—the President's Tree." The Mayor leaned forward, searching his friend's eyes.

"I know it," came the quiet answer. "When I spoke, I had the man who planted the tree in my mind. He was the example I was holding up to the children's admiration and emulation."

"Yes, and that's what went to my heart, Bishop." The speaker's head dropped dejectedly on his breast, his arms hung down limp by his side. "Year after year, I've heard you preach pretty much the same sermon each Fourth of July under the same tree. You've made me a bit uneasy every time, but to-day your eye was upon me, boring into me like a gimlet, and I fairly squirmed. That's what I wanted to talk about. You've been under a delusion, parson, for twenty years, and I've been a guilty coward in keeping you in the dark so long."

"What do you mean?" There was only mild curiosity in the question, indulgent skepticism in the kindly look that accompanied it.

"What do I mean? Just this; that I'm a miserable prevaricator in having concealed the truth all these years, and made you preach a kind of falsehood. Bishop," continued the mayor, sitting up and speaking with great earnestness, "you remember the sapling the President planted—how it withered and wilted, and you and I were both in despair lest it should die."

"I remember."

"Well, Bishop, we both loved that tree, and prized it dearly, because of all it meant for us and the town. We loved it, just as if it had been a poor little baby fighting for its life. We watered it, both of us—sometimes I think we gave it too much water—too much of the feeding bottle's bad, the doctor says. But in spite of all our care, all our anxiety, it was dying before our eyes—dying, day by day, like a slip that had never properly rooted."

"I remember, Ellis," commented the Bishop, smiling. "Then all of a sudden, it took a new lease of life, and got along splendidly. Don't you remember the

difference we noticed one morning?"

The Mayor uttered a groan.

"That is where my prevarication began," he murmured. "Bishop, I've got to own up to everything now. The President's Tree is a whitened sepulchre."

"No, sir, it's a live oak, in the fullest meaning of the word."

"Well, it ain't what it pretends to be, anyhow. The tree the President planted died. That night you have just referred to I was restless, and couldn't sleep. I came outside for a walk, and wandered this way through the park—wasn't a park then, but we had planned making a park around the President's Tree, you remember, same way as the man bought a dog for the bone he found on the street."

The parson laughed.

"Yes," he assented, "I suppose the genesis of our park was hardly less ridiculous. But the park's here all right, Mayor, and a grand park, too"—this with a triumphant glance to left and right.

"Oh, yes, the park's here, but it just grew around the President's Tree. Well, you were so dead set on the park, Bishop, it made me doubly nervous about the tree. And there it was, shriveling and withering, little better than a stick of cinnamon. I came along that night to have a look. And what do you think I found?"

"Well?"

"The sapling snapped clean across, and the whole top gone. It was blowing pretty hard that night. I guess the wind had done the damage, and carried pretty nigh the whole blamed thing away. I was concerned about the tree, but more about you—and the park. The whole scheme just seemed about busted."

There was a pause, but the parson did not interrupt. So the mayor continued his confession.

"You remember we had got two trees ready for the planting, and chose the likeliest the morning the President came. Well, the other one was left in my yard, stuck in an old kerosene tin, just as we brought it down from the foothills. But it was all right and flourishing, so, when I saw the broken off stump, I thought of its mate, and—"

"Stole home for it, and planted it in

place of the other that had perished," interrupted the parson, with a tranquil nod of understanding.

"Eh? What's that?" exclaimed the mayor, starting up in great surprise. "Then you knew this, Bishop?"

"Certainly, I knew it."

"And you talked that morning about the wonderful improvement the President's Tree had made in a single night!"

"You did the talking, my friend. I just listened."

"Well, the tree had improved, hadn't it?" said the Mayor, with a dry grin. "'Didn't look the same'—these were the very words I used; I remember 'em. I kept dodging around the truth, and you fell in with the whole deception, like an innocent lamb. After a bit I hadn't the courage to own up to the trick I'd played you. That's where my moral cowardice showed itself. But you tell me now that you knew the truth all the time, Bishop?"

"Yes, I knew it from the beginning. But, after all, the mere substitution of a different sapling was a small matter. The association of the spot with the President remained—that was the all-important lesson to abide in the people's minds. I didn't wish to disturb it, so I humored your kindly little subterfuge. Besides, I had a reason of my own for not pressing the subject too closely."

"And what was that?"

"I too had been out walking that night—an hour or two before you, I fancy. Well, I came to the park, and I found a miserable cow browsing on the withered, and now also severed, crown of the President's live oak."

"Well, I'll be"—but a glance from the parson checked any too energetic expression of chagrined astonishment.

"I was shocked and grieved," continued the narrator. "Oh, much more than you can imagine." There was a moment of dramatic pause, and a wistful smile came over the pale face. "For the cow was mine, Ellis. Old Flossie—have you forgotten her? She had dragged her tether; the disaster had been caused by my carelessness."

"But the tree was dead, Bishop," cried the Mayor, eager to comfort his

fellow reprobate. "The tap root had rotted off—nothing could have saved it."

"So I guessed. But you will understand now my readiness that morning to accept your solution of the difficulty. I had left the house early, to view the mischievous by daylight. I knew well how disappointed all the folks would be when they came to learn that the President's Tree had been destroyed. I was greatly relieved in mind, I can tell you, to see the new tree in place. So I left the popular sentiment rooted, Mayor. No need to pull that up, surely; and in this case there was nothing better to plant out in its stead."

"But your sermon, Bishop? Your sermon this very day—on a dozen Fourth of July, too, at a low reckoning?"

"Well, what of my sermon, as you choose to call it?"

"Knowing the truth all the time, you piled it on to the children, bidding them shape their lives by that of the great and noble man who planted the tree."

"That is why, when I came to this part of my speech, Ellis, I turned my eye on you."

"What're you driving at now, Bishop?"

"Just this, old friend, that if the children shape their lives by yours, if they live as you have done, straight, true, working for the good of everyone around them, I think God will say that all is well. The President's Tree, remember, is something more than leaves and bark and timber. As I keep on telling our people, it stands for a sentiment—a lofty and inspiring sentiment. 'Do the right, fearlessly do the right,' said the President, as he stood before us that day, spade in hand. And it is you, Ellis, who, by the example of your life, have kept the sentiment flourishing among us all these years."

The Mayor had risen to his feet, to avoid his comrade's look of mingled admiration and affection. He waved aside the flow of embarrassing words.

"Stop that, Bishop. So the President's Tree was ate up by a durned cow, was it? But here's Selina's little gal. Come away, my pigeon."

And the brawny arms opened for the toddling wee maid, the rough face hid itself against her snowy garments.

Love and the Fence-Cutters

BY BIRDSALL BRISCOE

"Take any one you like, Dick," drawled Thornton from the hammock.

"But I like 'em all," said Dick generously. He was stretched full length, neatly, but rather precariously, balanced on the wide piazza rail. His head rested on its upward ramp, and he contemplated idly through a lazy drift of cigarette smoke, the toes of his immaculate riding boots.

"Any of the polo ponies," limited Thornton, making a vicious effort to disentangle the fringe of the hammock from the rowels of his spurs. "I raise 'em for your sort. Don't ride any of the cow ponies. I'll be hanged if I'll have you town chaps ruining them!"

"Oh, cut it, Frank! You invite a fellow out to your God-forsaken old ranch,

and then won't let him enjoy himself."

"Invited you!" exploded Thornton. "Confound this hammock! Before I was married I had one hanging out here made out of barrel staves—you remember it?" his mind going back to previous visits of this same unwelcome gentleman. "Well, Della had it burned up—said it was unsightly. It was, but with only us and the Mexicans to see it. And it was comfortable; a fellow didn't have to undress every time he wanted to lie down in it," he went on, unbuckling his spurs, and sitting up. "Invited you!" he resumed in an injured tone. "Don't tell me I did that, Dick. You'll make me think I'm subject to fits of temporary insanity!"

"If that's sufficient evidence for con-

viction, you're it," observed Melton, "and now you'll have to suffer the consequences."

Thornton affected a dubious expression. "I suppose I'll have to. But I won't be responsible for the actions of my cow-punchers toward you—you're a constant temptation."

"Which they don't often resist," murmured Dick retrospectively. "That solemn individual who rejoices in the name of 'Bum-wing Hudson' has converted the tops of my best riding boots into wrist guards."

"Bum-wing is ingenious. I'm glad they were good for something. He may find some use for those infernal riding trousers you affect."

"Possibly," suggested Melton with gravity, "he might use them as a saddle blanket."

"No danger of his wearing them. Any self-respecting cow-puncher would rather have 'em under the saddle than across it. There comes Bum-wing now," he added, looking toward the corrals, "with Alma's horse. You'd better go to the corral for yours. My cow-punchers can saddle horses for the girls, but you men will have to look out for yourselves."

Mr. Richard Melton tossed his cigarette out into Mrs. Thornton's favorite geranium bed, and got lazily to his feet. "Frank," he observed, "you're the most unaccommodating jackass I ever visited. The next house party in which I find myself involved, I exercise more judgment in the selection of a host."

Frank Thornton, ranchman, crossed to the *olla* and drank deeply before answering. "The next houseparty my wife saddles onto the Diamond T ranch house, I'll establish a censorship and re-edit the list of guests."

"Which means, I presume—"

"That there is one gentleman now here who would languish in town."

"Meaning me?" drawled Melton cheerfully.

"You may draw your own conclusions. I happen to know you better than any of my other guests."

"My! I wonder what you'd do with the rest of 'em if you knew 'em. But if you'd treat me that way, I'd come to your

party, and eat just as hearty as if I were really invited," he chanted.

"Are you two quarreling, as usual?" asked a pleasant voice, and they turned as Della Thornton stepped through a long window onto the piazza behind them.

"Quarreling? Lord, no! We're only cussin' each other out—"

"A nice expurgated edition," corrected Dick.

"Just as we used to do at school, eh Dick?"

Melton, standing on the steps, turned to Mrs. Thornton. "He's hurt my feelings, Della. Now he's trying to make amends, and in order to smooth my ruffled temper next, he'll offer to have Bum-wing saddle my horse for me."

"It isn't likely, Della. He's lazier than the white pony you learned to ride on when you first came to the ranch."

"Impossible!"

Dick looked at the corrals shimmering in the heat, and then back onto the cool shadowy piazza. "I don't know that I like the comparison," he murmured.

"It's well Whitie isn't within hearing distance. He's a faithful old beast, and I shouldn't care to hurt his feelings."

"That wasn't the comparison I had reference to."

"He means the sunshine and the shade, Frank."

"Dick always was an unintelligible ass."

"And to think," said Melton with an injured air, "I volunteered to go to San Rosario for the mail, just out of the goodness of my heart; knowing all your men were too busy. And these are the thanks I get!"

"I dare say Dickie's accommodating me was uppermost in your mind when you volunteered to go. Especially after you had consulted Alma Lawlor on the subject, and she had agreed to go with you." He slipped an arm around his wife and grinned at the graceful lounging through his Texas tan.

Dick observed him with a gathering frown. "Quit it, Frank! I won't have anything like that around me. If I hadn't thought the honeymoon was over! Oh, Lord!" he groaned at a further demonstration of affection, and swinging on

his heel, he strode across the lawn toward the stables.

"You shouldn't have said that, Frank."

"What?" blankly.

"About Alma. They haven't spoken—really spoken, you know, for a week."

"Goodness! They'll have a lonesome ride. Fourteen miles of it!"

"And you a married man, Frank!" reproachfully. "You should know better. Just think what can happen within fourteen miles!"

He tried to think, looking into her eyes. "Lots!" he agreed, boyishly. They had been married only a matter of months, so I think we shouldn't be too critical. Nothing that can be intelligently recorded was said until she looked up and saw a cowboy limping up the path leading two horses; Alma Lawlor's and her husband's.

"Where are you going, dear?" she asked. "You promised you'd stay at the ranch to-day."

A worried look came into Thornton's face for a moment. "Out to the 'shack,' Della. Those fence-cutters have been busy again. Fant telephoned me just now. He thinks he knows who did it. I'll be back for supper—dinner, I should say," he smiled, "now that we have a house full of people. By the way, Della," drawing on his gauntlets, "how are you going to amuse our guests?"

"Amuse them!" she echoed. "Why, you dear goosie, I'm not going to amuse

them. Let them amuse themselves. They have the polo field and plenty of ponies and mallets—"

"That blamed little ass, Rex Hastings, broke four yesterday—"

"But his horse fell with him, and now he's so badly frightened he'll not play again. And the golf links, though they aren't in very good shape."

"It isn't golf that's most played on the links."

"Frank, dear, I believe you're growing subtle!"

"This wholesale slaughter of polo mallets and golf balls," he grumbled good humoredly, "will put the Diamond T in the hands of Mr. Spaulding. I see its finish."

Her hand closed over his mouth, and he did not neglect the opportunity to kiss it. "And they can ride and

hunt," she pursued.

"And get lost in this labyrinth of cactus and mesquite," he added, looking across the infinite sweep of undulating tree tops.

"Of course," she agreed, "that's a part of the game. Then we can organize search parties—"

"And everybody will get lost from everybody else—"

"Except each other."

"Is it possible that I have married a match-maker?" he asked fondly.

"Eve was the only woman who was not."

"Think of the responsibility!"



DRAWN BY HOWARD HEATH

"Are you two quarreling as usual?"

"We don't dare!" she shuddered. "Mrs. Leighton has been showing signs of theatricals," she announced abruptly.

"Della!" he cried, "Why didn't you break this to me gently!"

"You dear silly, I know it's an awful shock, but it's true."

"What have we done to deserve this!" he groaned.

Della stroked his hand, and looked up into his face, grave with mock seriousness. "I've discouraged her as much as I dare. I hate people who do things. It's just as if she were taking advantage of our isolation. But Frank," she went on, slipping an arm around his bronzed neck, "leave those beastly old fence cutters alone. Mr. Fant and Curley Edwards can do everything that is necessary—though I don't know what that is—that's what you pay them for, dear. I wish you wouldn't go," she added wistfully, "but I know you must."

"Spoken by the dearest little woman in the world. And you needn't worry. Your devoted husband isn't one bit blood-thirsty. All he'll do will be to spot 'em—if he can, and turn the rest over to Hardy and his rangers. I'll 'phone you when I leave the shack," he added, running down the steps.

A few minutes later, with his cowpuncher, he disappeared into the mesquite, and Mrs. Thornton turned in answer to a voice from within.

"Della! Della! Where are you, dear? I can't find anyone to do anything. Did you ever see such people to sleep? Won't you fasten this, please—thank you!—Where is Dick?" she finished breathlessly.

"There he comes. He had to saddle his own horse—just think of it! Frank made him do it."

"Oh, Dick only makes out that he's lazy. It's all affected, Della. He'd much rather saddle his own horse. And mine, too. He likes to do things for me."

"If no one but you notices it."

"How did you know?"

"Frank was that way."

Alma lifted her chin belligerently. "It isn't a parallel case at all."

"All men are—alike—more or less," said the other, with matronly wisdom.

"Do you think so?" vaguely; which implied that she did not.

"I say, Alma!" called Dick from the gate, "we'll be late if you waste much more time."

"Dick is always in a hurry. We always get to the theatre hours before the curtain goes up. That is, we would, if I'd let him have his way."

"You will be late, dear. It's a long ride, you know."

"I don't mind. Let's make him wait a little longer, so he'll be furious when we do go out to the gate."

"Why do you do it, Alma?"

"I don't know," seriously. "Dick and I have quarreled since mud pie days. Lately he doesn't seem to mind it much—sometimes not at all."

"I don't wonder," observed Mrs. Thornton.

"Sometimes," and the gray eyes grew dark with seriousness, "I think I may be losing my hold over Dick. But don't tell anyone I told you. If you weren't such a graveyard for secrets—"

"Then why don't you marry him, Alma?"

"Marry Dick!" exclaimed the girl, at the imminent danger of that gentleman's hearing her, "Why, Della, I know him too well. It's positively indecent!"

"Shall I take this 'plug' back to the stable?" called Mr. Melton.

"Dick's almost angry. That's the tone he assumes just before the eruption. I'm coming," she called, pecking her hostess a good-bye kiss. "And if we're a wee bit late, Della, don't worry."

They had ridden some distance before either of them spoke, but as they passed through the gate into the public road, they paused for a few minutes looking back at the ranch house in its broad clearing; its white bulk thrown into relief against the sky-bound sweep of green beyond.

"Thornton's a lucky devil," said Melton, half to himself. "All this, and a charming wife besides."

"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife—'

"Thornton isn't my neighbor, and, anyway, I'm not coveting his wife, nor his ox, nor any of his other possessions."

"I should think a flirtation with Mrs.

Leighton would keep your hands full—or rather your—" "

"What put that into your head, Alma?"

"Miss Lawlor, if you please."

"Do you want to spoil your ride?"

"Why?" There was a pause, but he did not speak. "How?" she offered.

"By trying to make me disagreeable."

"Could I?" she asked.

"There are times, but not to-day, Alma. I'm in too good a humor."

"Perhaps," she suggested, "Mrs. Leighton might account for your—good spirits."

"Perhaps," he admitted. "I don't believe my condition could be traced to your treatment."

"Have I had an opportunity? Dear me!—not that I have sought it—unless we except the absent treatment. You rode with her to the shack yesterday afternoon; played golf with her the day before; and the preceding day she read 'Crushed Pansies' to you all the forenoon."

"You've kept tab on me quite well," he said, leaning down to hide a smile, while he affected to examine his stirrup leather.

"I hadn't noticed it myself. Rex called my attention to your devotion," she answered quickly. "Mrs. Leighton should be more thoughtful, or you; the poor dear has had rheumatism all day. You noticed she wasn't down to lunch?"

"I didn't notice," replied the gentleman with gravity. "You see, I wasn't at lunch to-day, myself."

"I knew she wasn't in her room."

The silence of half a mile dragged by them. Then he spoke to the girl who looked straight ahead.

"Does it really make such a difference, Alma?"

She did not answer directly. "There comes someone," she observed. "Can you make them out?"

He glanced down the road at the approaching riders. As a matter of fact, he knew the girl didn't care who they were, but there appeared to be something familiar about their figures. Then he heard her speaking again:

"I shall have to ask you again to be kind enough to call me Miss Lawlor."

"Then I will return to my question."

"Which was?" She raised her eyebrows. This facial distortion with Alma was a fine art, and a joy forever.

"The question I have asked a thousand times, and in as many ways."

"Haven't I answered it as many times, Dick?"

"You're much too clever to answer it definitely. The last time you told me you loved me was the day before I put on long trousers—or was it the day before your first long dress? Since then I may say that your affection for me has decreased in the same ratio that my legs have lengthened."

"Dick! How vulgar!"

"Is it to be Miss Lawlor and Mr. Melton?"

"I've tried Mr. Melton, but I'm too old to get used to him."

"I didn't introduce him to you," said he.

"I know, but as long as I intended having you call me 'Miss Lawlor,' I thought—" she paused. The approaching riders met and passed them, awkwardly raising their hats, and Melton half turned in his saddle and looked after them as they rode down the slope.

"Do you know them?" asked the girl.

"Yes—but I don't recall their names just now," thoughtfully. His brows came together in a straight line.

"My!" she cried. "Don't look that way—you look positively villainous!"

"I'm thinking," briefly.

"Do you often think that way at the breakfast table?"

He looked up quickly. "I don't know. Why?"

"Nothing. I was thinking of your question. That's all."

He smiled cheerfully. "You're only bluffing. And I remember now who those two men are back there." He shifted in the saddle, his eyes on the two riders as they grew smaller down the road's perspective. "Bud Jordan's the one on this side, the other one is Pedro Ramon. They used to work for Thornton, but he fired 'em for something—I've forgotten."

"I didn't want to know—not really."

"I knew it. I was simply informing

myself aloud, just as the maid tells herself a lot of interesting family secrets in the first act of the melo-drama."

"Are you ever really serious, Dick?"

"Why, yes. Only when I'm serious, you won't be; and it's no use being serious unless we can both be so at the same time." He paused and glanced apprehensively at the sun, and quickened the pace. "We'll be late. It gets quite cold after dark, you know."

"Oh, I know! But let's be imprudent and be late!"

Clearly the lady was not in a good humor, and the last few miles that brought them into San Rosario and its single street was covered in silence.

Mr. Melton passed the girl a few letters, and then stuffed the remaining mail into his saddle bags. "You're not going to read them now?" he inquired, as they rode away.

"I am," she managed, as she drew off her gloves, tugging at the finger tips with her teeth.

"We'll be late," he cautioned.

"I don't care, Mr. Prudence."

The gentleman relapsed into silence, and became absorbed in his own mail. They reached the top of Lone Tree hill before either spoke. Mr. Melton had long since finished his letters, and he noticed that the lady had read one of hers over at least half a dozen times. The handwriting was characteristically feminine and quite unintelligible, so we can't accuse him of a dishonorable action.

"Have you committed it to memory?" he asked pleasantly.

There was an angry light in her eyes as she looked up—though it may have been the red glare of the setting sun.

"Not quite," icily, and the letter was resumed.

Mr. Melton buttoned his coat, pulled the broad brimmed hat down over his eyes, which shut out a glorious sunset, and a pair of eyes—not his own—now mischievous, and lighted a cigarette.

The girl tore a very uninteresting letter to pieces and looked up. The sun, a burnished disc of copper, was dropping towards the palely tinted hills that bound a restlessly swaying world of feathery tree

tops. They were the center of a mesquite sea, and across the crest of this green flood leading towards the sun there seemed to be a path of rippling green and gold, that, as it neared the horizon became a road of liquid fire. Encroaching shadows dappled the undulations of the green sweep here and there with growing lakes of lavender and purple that merged into each other as the sun drew closer to the horizon.

"Look, Dick!" whispered the girl. Momentarily her hand rested on his forearm. She had forgotten herself.

"What?" He looked up quickly, pushing his hat back from his face. Knowing, he chose not to see.

"Isn't it splendid!"

"Quite spectacular," he conceded, without enthusiasm. "I wish Thornton wouldn't use this kind of tobacco."

Followed a silence—a volcanic silence. The brilliant world grew gray, and the riders reached the back gate of the Thornton pasture. The man drew rein. "We'll turn in here," he said, "and ride down the fence—this is the back line of the pasture—to the shack. I have some mail for Fant and Curley Edwards. Then we can go to the ranch. It will take us a few miles out of our way, but you don't mind being late, and they'll be glad to get their mail to-night. We can telephone from the shack the reason we are late."

"I should love to," she said coldly.

He swung open the gate, and they rode into the pasture, leaving the public road behind.

Dick leading, they trotted single file down the trail. Road there was none. On one side the dim perspective of fence posts, on the other, the almost impenetrable thicket of catclaw, mesquite and cactus. Presently the moon rose, shining through the lace-like tracery of limbs and leaves.

They rode some distance without speaking, and the clear silence was broken only by the muffled hoof beats of their horses, and now and then a quivering twang of the barbed wire was telegraphed to them.

"Don't strike the fence with your crop!" cried Alma, petulantly.

Melton half turned in his saddle. "I beg your pardon!"

"It irritates me."

"What?"

The barbed wire twanged sibilantly.

"That—"

"But I didn't do it," defensively,

"I wonder what it can be?" she ventured.

"Cattle scratching themselves," he suggested across his shoulder.

"How matter-of-fact you are. Have you no imagination?"

"It doesn't pay to attempt cleverness. One becomes confused—" he broke off suddenly, as his horse stopped, trembling.

"What is it?" Her voice was pitched with nervousness.

"Unless you are rich," he spurred the black forward, "or dress extremely well and are gray above the temples. Then anything goes for—" The horse plunged forward, cutting short his rider's observations, and stopped. Ahead, the moonlight flashed on quivering coils of barbed wire across the path, and Mr. Melton threw himself to the ground. "Cleverness," he finished, holding up his hand. "Stop! The fence is down—be careful—your horse will cut himself. I'm afraid Thornton's men don't ride this string often."

"How uncomfortable!" The nervous tension snapped.

"You know very well what I mean," drawled Melton, as he coiled the loose lengths of wire and threw them aside from the trail. The barbs did wonderful things to his gloves and trousers, and also to his temper. Finally the trail was clear and they rode forward, slowly.

"You've been awfully disagreeable today. I don't think I shall ride with you again."

"There are times when I can be quite entertaining," said he. "Won't you give me another chance?"

A little blood-letting is sometimes a good thing; the barbs had torn his hands.

"You at least afforded entertainment for Mrs. Leighton."

He rode ahead, so he had a right to indulge in a cheerful smile.

"Which, I wonder, was more entertained? She, myself, or our audience?"

The short, sharp twang of the wire, like the snapping of a guitar string, punctuated his remark.

"There it is again!"

"Thanks," he tossed across his shoulder.

"Dick! You are very ugly!"

"Let me be beautiful in the dark."

"Sarcasm isn't your forte."

"Suggest something; I strive to please," he said penitently.

"You are sometimes an intelligent listener."

"Flattery is yours."

Again the wires snapped.

"And to prove that your observations are not unfounded," he said, "someone is cutting Mr. Frank Thornton's fence into nice little bits!"

The idea came to him as swiftly as the events that echoed it. Ahead of them something moved in the brush. Mr. Melton spurred recklessly forward towards it, and in that second many things happened. Two rapiers of flames pierced the shadow, and with the ripping crack of the instantaneous shots he saw in the moonlight the faces of the two men he had passed on the road. Then, as he fell crumpled from the saddle, they crashed into the brush, and silence closed behind them.

Momentarily the girl looked down at the still form beside the trail. "Dick! Dick!" she cried softly, "What is it?"

He had fallen free from his horse, which stopped a short distance ahead, looking back in the moonlight. The girl slipped from her saddle and bent over the man.

"Oh!" she choked, "they've hurt him! Open your eyes, Dick! Don't try to frighten me—it isn't fair. Speak to me—say something—anything—but don't frighten me this way. Oh, they couldn't have—Why!" She moved him so his head was bathed by the yellow moonlight. "How pale you are, and—and there's blood on your forehead. Don't" she screamed, "Don't roll your eyes that way!" She supported his head on her knees, telling herself over and over again that she must not faint. Then realization came back to her. "Whiskey," she murmured, "they always give them whiskey in books." Then ever so gently



DRAWN BY HOWARD HEATH

"You have already killed him."

she rested his head on the ground and searched his saddle-bags, returning with his flask. Forcing his teeth apart, she poured a stream into his mouth. He strangled spasmodically and opened his eyes.

"Drink this, dear," she urged.

He raised his hand to his head and looked at her with dazed eyes. "I haven't signed the pledge," he muttered, twisting his face into a faint smile. His hand was wet as he brought it away from his forehead. "By Jove! They bowled me over clean," he said weakly. "What was it? Oh, yes—I remember now. The fence cutters. We must go to the shack and tell Fant, Thornton's foreman." He struggled to his feet and leaned in limp weakness against her horse. "My! But I'm dizzy—Alma! You're not hurt!" he cried in alarm.

She shook her head. Her eyes were fascinated by the awful whiteness of his face—so old and drawn looking—and that ugly black stream creeping down his cheek.

"What a queer feeling a thump like that on the head gives a fellow—"

"You must let me tie something around it," she said in a small voice.

"Yes—do—lower, around my neck!"

"Dick!"

"Think what might have happened to you! My infernally savage temper!"

"Hush! I won't have you talk about Dick that way!" She bound his handkerchief tightly over the place where the bullet had grazed his forehead. "I don't allow anyone to abuse him except myself, and that only because he enjoys it as much as I do!—There—" she finished, applying a nice little pat above the wound, which was very dear of her, but it made the man wince. "And besides, it was more my fault." She paused, listening, and the muffled clatter of galloping hoofs came to them. "Oh!" she cried in a frightened whisper. "They're coming back! I wonder what they'll do?"

"The question is, what will we do?" he said lightly.

"The answer to that is run!" she said breathlessly. "Oh, Dick! You must. Your head, dear. You're already hurt."

"That's it—my head," he said thickly, steadying himself against her horse. "Only I think I'd run in a circle!"

She led his horse to him. "Dick! Can't you?" she begged.

He looked at her stupidly. "I think I could—if you'd help me keep the landscape from turning handsprings." He turned his head slowly, watching the circling trees.

She helped him clumsily to the saddle. "You'd better go now," he said, then lowering his voice to a whisper; "they're coming back to kidnap you. Ride into the brush, there," he went on, pointing unsteadily, "and I'll ransom you with my heart.—They're going slower, now," weakly, drawing his hand across his forehead.

"What?" she asked, beside him with her horse.

"The trees—don't you notice them? See that one—"

"Yes," she humored him, "but don't look at them, Dick. They'll only make you dizzy."

"Dizzy," he repeated dully, "that's it—are you dizzy?"

Her assurance was cut short by a sharp "Hands up!" and four men dashed into the open rift.

She complied with alacrity, but as the man raised his, the sharp command for the moment clearing his head, the landscape plunged again before his eyes, and he reeled in the saddle and would have fallen, but the girl caught him in her arms. "Dick!" she cried, and then looked up. "You beasts, you have already killed him!"

"Alma!" Mr. Thornton threw himself from his horse, and was beside her in a moment. "What does this mean?"

"She looked at him with dull comprehension. "It's you—I thought it was the fence cutters. See; they have killed Dick!"

"My God! Here, Fant!" he called to his foreman.

Melton, leaning over the saddle horn and holding on by his horse's mane, steadied by the girl's arm around his body, flogged his reeling senses to their duty. "Only a scratch, Frank," he said thickly, and then laughed lightly,

straightening in the saddle. "Just a scratch—did you ever hear of anyone getting anything else. I'd be all right if you'd only put the trees and things to bed—they dance so—they make my head swim."

"How did this happen?" asked Thornton, looking from one to the other, as Fant passed the wounded man a whiskey

"Which way did they go?" asked Thornton.

"Straight up," said Dick. He turned to the girl, and she indicated the direction they had taken.

"We can do nothing to-night. Dick, can you ride home?" asked Thornton.

"Can I ride home? I can ride anything!"



DRAWN BY HOWARD HEATH

"Just grazed the scalp."

flask. "We heard shots—that's what brought us here."

"It happened that quickly," said Melton, wiping his lips. Then Fant helped him to the ground and examined his hurt, while Dick told of their adventure.

"Hell!" drawled Bum-wing, as he limped towards his brother cow-puncher, "just grazed the scalp."

"That crack on the head has sent his senses into the mesquite," said Thornton.

"How much whiskey did you give him before we came, Miss?" Fant was more subtle.

She showed him the flask. "It wasn't quite full," she said.

"I think he'll be able to ride home all right, sir," said Fant, as he held the horse for the injured man to mount. "If

we can keep up with him," he added under his breath.

The following morning on the broad piazza, stretched on a lounge among a profusion of sofa cushions lay Dick Melton, pale and picturesque. Frank Thornton, dressed for riding, stood beside him, smoking reflectively. It was some minutes before either of them spoke. At last the ranchman broke the silence.

"Well—"

Dick moved uneasily and looked up. "Oh! It's you, is it?"

"How's the head?"

A responsive grunt, quite unintelligible. "That's what they all ask me. Say something original," irritably.

"I suppose you think you can be disagreeable because you happened to stop a stray bullet."

Melton smiled cheerfully. "I really ought to be a hero, you know, according to the rules, but I'm not. The men all seem to think I did it on purpose—just to excite the sympathy of the others—"

"And the others?"

"They shun me as if I had smallpox. Seem to think I'm mortgaged."

"What makes you think that?" asked Thornton dryly.

"My own inherent conceit," replied Melton brazenly.

Thornton barely smiled. "Perhaps there are some grounds for their actions," he observed.

Dick lighted a cigarette. "You asked me how my head was," he said. "I suppose it's better. Cigarettes taste fairly decent."

"Don't you think you're making an ass out of yourself, Dick?"

Mr. Melton allowed himself a look of surprise. "Why, yes, I suppose so. I usually do if I have the opportunity. In what particular instance?"

"Sometimes you force the opportunity."

"It's useless to try to please you. What have I done now?"

"You've left undone those things which you ought to have done—"

"And done those things which I ought not." In my youth I got that mixed up with the commandments."

"And have observed it rigidly."

"It's something to have done one thing well."

"There's a young lady up stairs whom you have made very unhappy."

"Dear me! What have I done?"

"As I've just said, it's what you haven't done, rather."

Dick re-lighted his cigarette. "You're trying to make me conceited," he said.

"Impossible!"

Then he chose to be serious. "It wouldn't be fair, Frank. I have an undue advantage."

"Nonsense! You need all the handicap you can get. We all do. D'ye think she'd have you if you both started on scratch?"

"Of course you're right," gloomily. "Still—"

"Now is your chance, my boy."

"How do you know?" with affected indifference, though his heart beat a tattoo against his ribs.

"Della—"

Mr. Melton smiled. "These women," he murmured, "these women!"

"God bless 'em!" supplemented the married man, and the one who was not married pressed his hand.

"Della didn't have an idea I'd tell—in fact, I promised her I wouldn't."

"Did they catch the fence cutters?" asked Dick abruptly, after a pause.

"You know quite well they did," said Thornton, turning as Bum-wing rode up leading his horse.

"Frank!" Dick called, and when the ranchman stood beside him, "Did Della think you wouldn't tell?"

Mr. Thornton drew on his gloves and frowned. "Of course, she *knew* I wouldn't," he said, turning on his heel.

Dick's eyes followed the two men as they rode away, but not his thoughts. They dwelt upon the events of the past night; of the girl who had been so brave until they had reached the ranch house, when she had broken down and wept like a child, and later, of certain words he had caught from her lips when he dimly remembered Della Thornton bathing his head with ice water. He came back to the present when the girl of his thoughts stepped through the window behind him



DRAWN BY HOWARD HEATH

"Don't you think you could eat some candy?"

and stood for a moment looking down at him.

"Don't you think you could eat some candy, Dick?"

"Oh, fudge!" he murmured.

"You're quite helpless — else you wouldn't dare!" She held the tray of candy beyond his reach. "You sha'n't have any unless you promise no more puns."

"That one made my head ache—really I'm punished."

"You should be! Promise?"

"You've taught me how to fetch, beg, and carry, all these years. Do you want me to balance those caramels on the end of my nose and snap at 'em?"

"Play dead," she suggested, then. "Oh, no! I didn't mean that—"

"It isn't much fun," in a voice calculated to inspire sympathy.

His efforts were not unrewarded. "It was awful last night." There was a delicious sweep of skirts, and she sat down beside him. "You frightened me dreadfully."

"Why?" abruptly.

"Why, I thought—I thought—you know very well what I thought. I'll not tell you!"

"Would you have cared very much—at all?" It was too evident that he invited sympathy, now.

"Cared? Why, of course, silly!" Miss Lawlor was quite matter-of-fact in her tone.

Dick groaned audibly. "It's no use," he murmured.

"What is it, Dick?" For an instant her cool hand fluttered on the hot bandage of his forehead.

"Not there. It's my heart," said he.

There was a silence. The man ate caramels from the tray the girl held upon her knees. Her eyes seemed to follow the figures on the links beyond the stables. At last he spoke.

"Alma, do you believe Frank to be a truthful man?" he asked seriously.

"Poor Dick," she murmured soothingly.

Mr. Melton assumed a sitting posture. "Poor Dick, the devil!" he cried. "I asked you if you thought Frank was capable of telling the truth!"

"I don't know what you mean," blankly.

Dick's chin rested on his two hands, his elbows on his knees. "Is my meaning so obscure?" he asked dubiously.

"There's something behind it, though."

"You're quite subtle," he rejoined.

Miss Lawlor started up with a little cry. "Frank—Della—Oh, how stupid of me! How could she!"

Dick clumsily secured her hands. "Sit down!" he commanded. "How could she?—The eternal question. Was it because you thought—because you pitied me?"

"You were only pretending last night?"

"I was not pretending. Were you?"

"And you overheard nothing?"

"Nothing—nothing I shouldn't have heard. You haven't answered my question about Frank."

Alma attempted to draw her hands away. "Some one's looking."

"I need witnesses," he said firmly. "It's an unfair advantage—naturally you feel sorry for me. But Frank says I never would win unless I had some sort of a handicap. And I want to win even if I have to stack the cards."

"Frank doesn't always speak the truth—"

"Alma!"

"Don't, Dick, Mrs. Leighton is looking across the lawn!"

"She'll do splendidly. Everyone will know in half an hour," he cried, as he kissed her again.

The Unexpected

BY GRACE G. BOSTWICK

When I came across Nan with drooping mouth, and a suspicious redness about the eyes, I wondered. Nan's such a jolly little girl, with her dimples and her tip-tilted nose and her freckles, always laughing about something or other. I had noticed a wistful look in her eyes at times, but nothing approaching the dumps.

"What's up, sis?" I asked.

Nan isn't what you'd call exactly pretty, but when you look at her she's so adorable that you forget her lack of beauty. Her mouth is wide, but it's red as a rose and as fresh, and her smile twinkles and dimples at the corners. Her eyes are too far apart, but they're a warm brown and long-lashed and big. Her hair is glorious. It just escapes being red, and it twines and curls up into the sweetest tendrils. Even her freckles avoid the commonplace. Instead of muddy patches, they are dainty pinky-brown beauty-spots that blend warmly into the lovely flush of her cheeks, and match the tint of her soft hair and eyes.

"I've half a notion to tell you," she said, looking at me searchingly.

"Make it a whole one, and fire away," I responded, obligingly.

"Well," Nan's face grew pinker. "I'm in love." She brought the words out with a hitch.

"Glory be!" I subsided into my chair with a gasp of astonishment.

"Yes," Nan declared, more positively this time. "I'm in love, and—"

I sat up suddenly, stricken into what?

"It's not Giddings?" I asked fearfully, "that—that bat-eared, wall-eyed son of a starfish?"

"Oh, Bud, you do talk so! No, it's not Giddings and it's not Harlow and it's not—"

"Then who is it?" I was getting impatient. I've felt for a long time that I had some proprietary rights, myself.

"Oh, I can't tell you that. You must find that out for yourself. Bring your

powers of observation into play."

That was a rather neat little stab. I'm always airing my views on observation.

"How do you know?"

Nan's face turned suddenly a beautiful pink. "Well, I—I—I can't sleep," she sighed.

"Yes," I offered encouragingly. No one should say that I failed in my duty at any rate. "Symptom number one."

She looked at me suspiciously, but my guileless expression must have reassured her, for she continued hesitatingly:

"I—I—can't eat."

"That's bad," I said, gravely. I looked beyond her to the empty box on the grass. "Oh, those!" she said, contemptuously, "One can always eat chocolates."

"When did you first discover the—the—?" I asked, with ill-concealed interest.

"Let's see—it was two weeks ago, at Hollowell's dance. He came into the ballroom suddenly and my heart just jumped—then I knew. That never happened to me before in my life."

There was a pause. I was trying to adjust myself to this new feature, and, incidentally, I was prodding my brains in a vain endeavor to recall who it was that Nan had in tow that night when I came on the scene. I gave it up with a sigh.

"Well, little girl," I said, patronizingly, "it's up to us to see that he reciprocates—hey?" She flushed again. The fact is, she was one pink glow. It was decidedly becoming, that glow, and I caught myself wishing that it might be on my account instead of some unknown duffer.

"I don't see how you can help," she hesitated, "I just can't tell you, and you'd never discover who he is."

I laughed, and then I sobered as I began to realize what it meant. I had never thought of Nan in the light of a sweetheart. We'd been the jolliest sort of chums for a matter of several years. You see, our places adjoin, and our people spend the summers at the same water-

ing-places. Nan's as near my ideal as any girl I ever came across, but I'm not up much on the girl question. Fact is, I've never had any time for 'em—excepting Nan, of course. That girl's a jewel. Never had a particle of nonsense about her until this new tack came up. She's never been a bit sentimental, and goodness knows I hope she isn't going to begin now. I'm afraid, though, to tell the truth. When one can't eat (except chocolates), nor sleep, and one's heart thumps at all sorts of times, it looks bad. I wonder if I could stand it to step aside and see her go about with some other chap all the time. Gee! I don't know about that!

"I'll find out who it is," I said suddenly, "and if he doesn't come up to the requirements of the situation, I'll punch his head. I'll punch it if he does," I added grimly, to myself.

Her eyes twinkled in the old way. "You're a dear, Bud," she said warmly. "I knew you'd help me. I feel better already."

I spent the next few days on the lookout. I discovered nothing. To be sure, there were about half a dozen suitors on the verge of madness because Nan would poke off with me instead of charming them with her company. I could not see that she favored any of them. She flirted and she flouted and she mocked them as she had always done. The only change, that I could see, was when I found her alone. Then she was apt to become quiet and thoughtful—sometimes almost sad. It can't be any of the fellows about here. There was that painter chap, Glawston; big-eyed, long-haired chump, who hung about her that night at the dance. I asked her about him. He's just the sort to set girls' hearts in a flutter, but not Nan's. I thought I knew Nan better than that. She looked up at me and screwed her eyes out of shape, but she didn't deny it when I said I'd bet my meerschaum he was the chap.

"Perhaps you'll never know," she said, in a faint, sad little voice, but the next minute she was laughing. That's Nan right over. You couldn't keep her down, no matter how you tried.

It was about a week after she told me that the squall came up so suddenly. We were out in my absurd little shell, trying to make it against the wind. Nan sat as still as the proverbial mouse. No hysterics about her. She'd have drowned with a smile on her lips. When we keeled over, she managed to keep up—she's a pretty fair swimmer—and we both got a fair hold of the boat, bottom side up as she was. We were there for perhaps half an hour, and in that time I came to a realization of myself. I loved Nan—loved her with all my heart and what soul I had. It struck me all of a sudden, so that I turned faint and sick. I shook like a man with the ague.

"You're chilled," she exclaimed, and I had to admit that I was. I couldn't tell her, in all fairness to the other chap, to say nothing of her pain, for I knew it would hurt her cruelly to turn me down. I set my teeth and watched for a sail, and it was only a few minutes until we were safe again. I haven't been the same man since. I seem to have lost myself somehow. I can't sleep either, and sometimes, honestly, I can't eat. My sympathy for dear little Nan has grown in proportion to my own discomfort. She seems to feel the change in me, and she tries by all of her charming little arts to win me out of myself. When she is the most adorable, altogether to be desired, my heart fails me. I am not sure I can stick it out. I must. It would be utterly unprincipled to burden her with my sorrow. She has enough to bear. I used to laugh at such trials as these. They seemed of the imagination—unreal. I never fancied that any one could really suffer from love.

Glawston has turned up again, and he's off his head over Nan. Any one can see that. She's getting strange—I can't understand her any more. She goes about with him most of the time. To be sure, I've held back lately on my own account. I meant to find out who it was, and I guess there's no doubt. She seems as gay and happy as ever, and I can't see that I am missed. Glawston! That dummy! He isn't fit to mow her lawn! But then, perhaps, neither am I. Well, I guess I can stand it. I'm no baby. I

thought I should be so glad to see her happy once more, and instead of that, it cuts like a knife. I am glad; oh, I am. I want her to be happy. I wish every joy for her—she knows that.

I haven't seen her—except for a moment or two—for nearly a week. We used to be together afternoons, and never missed an evening. Well!

Things are happening. Nan called me to her this afternoon and asked me to take her for a row to-night. Of course, I said I would. I know what she wants. She's accepted Glawston and she intends to let me be the first to hear it. It will take a little sand to congratulate her properly, and do things up brown.

Oh, what a fool I have been, what an egregious idiot! Nan, bless her dear heart, is a jewel! I took her out rowing and talked like a phonograph for half an hour. When I stopped for breath, Nan laughed.

"Aren't you tired?" she asked.

"Tired? No; why should I be tired?" I asked inanely, my one thought to ward off the telling of that awful thing.

"Poor Bud," she said and then she crept over in the seat next to me. "I've got something to tell you," she said softly.

"Let her come," I said grimly, my jaw solid with determination.

"You've been so different lately, so cold and stand-offish," she complained, plaintively.

"Yes," I volunteered, coldly.

"Bud, dear, don't be that way."

I softened. "I'm glad you're going to be happy," I said miserably.

"How did you know?" she asked. I laughed recklessly. I was near to the end of my rope.

"It wouldn't take the divination of an oracle to see how things are going."

She laughed. "There are none so blind as those who won't see," she said, enigmatically. "Bud," she said, after a pause, and I noticed that her voice was tremulous, "if you loved some one and you knew that they didn't care for you, what would you do?"

"Make 'em care," I responded quickly, without a thought of the way in which I had really handled such a situation.

"Make 'em care," she repeated, thoughtfully. "That was what I tried to do."

"Well, you've succeeded," I said roughly, wondering why she lingered so over the telling of her engagement.

"I—hope so—I'm really not sure," she stammered.

"My conscience!" I ejaculated. "I should think it would be plain enough to you. Every one else can see it. Glawston's actually batty about you."

"Glawston!" she uttered the name softly, thoughtfully. "So you thought I loved Glawston."

"You never denied it," I declared sturdily, "and you've been with him continually." I could not quite keep the injured note out of my voice.

"Poor Buddy," she cooed, and put out her hand to me. I took it. I had been starved too long to resist the temptation.

There was a pause. "I don't know how to tell you," Nan said in an embarrassed way.

"Never mind," I replied, content for the moment. The feeling of that little hand in mine was quite sufficient. I dared think no farther.

The moon was very bright. Nan looked up at me and her eyes shone in its light like stars. That's old, but it's true, too. She laughed suddenly, and hid her face in her hands.

"I believe you do care," she said, almost in a whisper. I started. "Care?" I said, not comprehending.

She raised shining eyes to mine. There was a strange look in them. "Bud," she said desperately, "have I got to propose to you?—and it isn't leap year, either."

I didn't think of finding fault with the construction of her sentence. I tumbled and the shock was anything but painful.

"Nan," I cried, "was I the fellow?"

I won't tell you her answer, because—well, I couldn't, anyway—it wasn't in the form of speech.



PHOTOGRAPH BY ELLIS AND WALERY, LONDON

Scene from "Peter Pan," Miss Maude Adams' new play by J. M. Barrie

Some Dramas of the Day

BY ACTON DAVIES

The actors' holiday is over. From seashore and mountain, by steamship, train, automobile and even by bicycle, the mummers, sunburned and rested, are hastening back to town. A month ago it was the managers who were up to their eyes in work. Now has come the time for the actors to begin their labors in real earnest. And of all the strenuous efforts of the year, there is nothing which comes closer to hard work than the rehearsals which are now being held in every theater, hall and lyceum within the limits of the metropolis. Some few wise and kind-hearted managers have called their companies together at some seashore resort. This is not a matter of philanthropy on their part, but merely because they have found it impossible to obtain a stage inside New York.

When one comes to think of it, how little the public really knows of the real preparation of a stage production! When the curtain rises on the first night they are ready to applaud if the play or actors please them, and equally ready to turn their thumbs down if the production falls below par. But the smoother and more

easy the performance, the less the public realizes the immense labor and the infinite pains which it has taken to bring forth the successful play.

The rehearsal of a first-class production usually begins about ten-thirty in the morning. At the first rehearsal the play is read, the parts allotted, and then the company is dismissed for the day. For the next two or three days the members of the company read their parts, and may be found hard at work in the theater from ten to five, with a few minutes' recess for a hasty lunch. But as the time for the opening draws nearer, there is really no time limit for rehearsal. The actors usually remain in the theater in the hands of a stage manager until they are forced to relinquish the stage for another company. So great is the demand for theaters or halls at present, that as many as six companies are rehearsing in one theater alone on Broadway. Each company rehearses for four hours, and the ones whose allotment of time falls during the night, esteem themselves particularly lucky in the broiling summer days. Even so important a company as

the Sothern-Marlowe combination has been obliged to hold the rehearsals of their three big new Shakespearean productions in a little hall on one of the side streets, which is so crowded when the members of the company have reported that there is scarcely room for any of the principals to move about.

It used to be the fashion for companies to rehearse in all the large cities, but now New York more than ever is the theatrical center, and even dozens of the plays which can never hope with the best of luck to get a Broadway hearing, persist

learning some of their best songs and most novel stage business, and then introducing them in one of his own productions in London before any of the American artists have had an opportunity to show them there. Mr. Hicks is quite frank about this matter, and in a conversation not long ago he excused himself by saying, "Well, why shouldn't I? I am always on the lookout for a good thing, and when I find a new song I consider I am doing a public service to my countrymen by bringing it before them as soon as possible." On account of the



PHOTOGRAPH BY ELLIS AND WALERY, LONDON

Scene from "The Catch of the Season"

in holding their rehearsals as near to Broadway as is possible.

At Daly's, Charles Frohman's forces are already hard at work on "The Catch of the Season," in which Miss Edna May will open the season on September 3d. Miss May, with her sister, returned to this country some six weeks ago and has been resting at her old home in Syracuse until it was time for rehearsals. This musical comedy was written in England by Seymour Hicks, who proves his admiration for things American by the habit he has of coming to this country, seeing three or four of the reigning successes,

many American interpolations in "The Catch of the Season," Mr. Frohman's task is a harder one than usual in producing it here, as a good deal of the stage business and a number of the songs have to be changed. However, those who have seen it declare that there are enough original features in it to make it a genuine success, and the part which Miss May is to play is certainly even a more charming one than she had in the "School Girl."

For the first time in many seasons, Nat Goodwin elected to spend his holiday on this side of the water, though it must

have been to him a case of being between love and duty, considering the big success which his wife, Miss Maxine Elliott, has scored abroad this summer. But Mr. Goodwin is to begin his season so early, and is already so enthusiastic about his rôle in his new play, "The Beauty and the Barge," that he has decided to remain here and keep his personal eye on all the preparations. This will be his début under the management of Charles Frohman, and in speaking of the matter not long ago, he said, "There is no use talking, you have got to give the public what they want. I wanted them to accept me in Shakespeare, but they don't seem inclined to stand for it. I am sorry, but I really suppose it is my duty, and I certainly shall try to make it my pleasure to smile and smile and be a light comedian still. I have always been tremendously fond of character work, and perhaps that is the reason why this dramatization of Mr. Jacob's story has made such a strong appeal to me. If it proves to be the big success which I am hoping for, I shall certainly be the happiest man in New York."



PHOTOGRAPH BY BURR MCINTOSH, NEW YORK

Miss Marie Doro



PHOTOGRAPH BY SARONY, NEW YORK

Miss Katherine Florence

Miss Katherine Florence, who is to be Mr. Goodwin's leading woman, is one of the few actresses who this summer have not had any holiday at all. She and her husband, Fritz Williams, had scarcely got settled in their cottage in Fort Washington when a hasty summons came to them both to play important parts in the Chicago production of "Mrs Temple's Telegram." From this play she will come direct to the rehearsals of "The Beauty and the Barge."

Miss Hilda Spong, who has recently bought a farm in Connecticut and gone into the chicken-raising business in an amateur way, will have to count her September chickens long before they are hatched if she wants to keep any tab on them at all, for she has been engaged to be W. H. Crane's leading woman next season, and the rehearsals of his new play, "An American Lord," will begin almost immediately.

The success which William Collier has scored in London in "The Dictator" will probably make a good deal of difference in his plans for next season. He will reopen in London early in Septem-

ber, and remain there until November at least, and in all probability on his return he will continue to appear in "The Dictator" for the remainder of the season. Collier's London success has proved a tremendous surprise to American actors. With scarcely an exception they predicted that his remarkably quiet method and extra dry humor would fail to be understood by Englishmen in general. As a matter of fact, however, no comedian that America has sent there in years has

tucket Island, and there wasn't a man, woman, child or dog in the little village that wasn't her friend. Out on the golf links the other day they were playing a tournament for the big silver loving-cup which she presented to the club when it was first started some six years ago. The cup must be won three years in succession by the same player in order to keep it, and among this year's contestants were George Fawcett, Robert Hilliard, H. Reeves Smith, Harry Woodruff,



PHOTOGRAPH BY BURFORD, LONDON

Nat C. Goodwin in "The Beauty and the Barge" by W. W. Jacobs

aroused such roars of laughter. The last time he appeared in London Mr. Collier was the call boy in Augustin Daly's company, somewhere in the early eighties when they made their first tour in England.

Speaking of the Daly company recalls dear old Mrs. Gilbert, and I have just come from a place where of all others in America her memory perhaps is most cherished and beloved. For the last seven or eight years of her life she always spent her summers at 'Sconset, Nan-

Hazard Short, Vincent Serano, Frank Birbeck, Brandon Hurst, Bronson Howard, and the Misses Alice Fisher, Percy Haswell, Nanette Comstock, Ethel Winthrop, and Mrs. Bronson Howard.

Already the fame which can come to even the greatest artists only after death is Mrs. Gilbert's, down in this little seashore village, for there is scarcely a house in which some chair in which she used to sit or some other little relic of the sweet old gentlewoman is not proudly shown.

It was during the course of this golf tournament that I tried to extract from Mr. Bronson Howard some facts about his new play. The piece is not named as yet, and Mrs. Howard is probably the only person who knows anything about it. "In all the years that I have been writing for the stage," said Mr. Howard, "this is really the first time that I have felt absolutely my own master in regard to the play that I was writing. At other times I have had to respect the wishes, to some extent at least, of the manager who was to produce it, or the star who was to create the leading rôle. But this time I am a free lance. This play is not only a pastime to me, it is a luxury. Perhaps it may prove an absolute failure, but, at all events, I have had my fun out of it already. I have had no offers for it from any managers, nor would I regard any seriously until the play is completed, and even then, unless all the conditions are exactly what I want, I shall think more than twice before I hand it over to the public. Only a man who has worked to order can appreciate how I feel towards this manuscript, and even if it proves a



PHOTOGRAPH BY BARONY, NEW YORK

William Collier



PHOTOGRAPH BY BARONY, NEW YORK

Miss Hilda Spong

complete fiasco when produced I shall still feel amply repaid for the two years' hard work I have spent upon it. I think I love this play of mine almost as much as Bob Hilliard does his dog, Van Bibber."

Mr. Howard's remark about Mr. Hilliard's dog recalls the fact that Mr. Hilliard himself is to be one of the important features of the coming New York season. Both he and Miss Bertha Galland, who are to be among the new Belasco stars, have cottages at 'Sconset which they have had to close long since on account of their professional engagements. Miss Galland is now hard at work rehearsing "Sweet Kitty Bellairs," while Mr. Hilliard is taking a ten weeks' farewell tour in vaudeville before making his first appearance at the Belasco Theater early in October in the new play in which Miss Blanche Bates is to star. It was a condition in Mr. Hilliard's contract that he should play for a season with Miss Bates before his own starring tour began, because in the new play, which is a drama of Western life, there is a rôle which Mr. Belasco was particularly anx-



PHOTOGRAPH BY BURR MCINTOSH, NEW YORK

Miss Hattie Williams

ious to secure him for. The name of this play is still a secret, but it is safe to say that there will be at least four or five words in the title. Mr. Belasco has adopted a policy in the naming of the plays for his three stars, Mrs. Leslie Carter, Miss Bates and Mr. Warfield, which is decidedly novel. Mrs. Carter's plays are always a single name, "Zaza," "Du Barry," "Adria"; Mr. Warfield's always begin with the definite article, "The Auctioneer," "The Music Master," while Miss Bates has invariably a descriptive title, such as "Under Two Flags," and "The Darling of the Gods."

In a letter which Miss Ellen Terry wrote to a friend in New York the other day, there was enclosed a photograph from a scene in the play in which she is now appearing, "Alice Sit-by-the-Fire." This picture will be particularly interesting to American theater-goers, as it shows Miss Terry as a woman of forty-two in the rôle which Miss Ethel Barrymore is to play in America. The other actor in the picture is Miss Irene Brough, who will be well remembered here for her

brilliant performance of *Sophie Fulgarnie* in "The Gay Lord Quex."

In the same letter Miss Terry also enclosed a picture of "Peter Pan," the other Barry play, in which Maude Adams is to be seen. In this letter Miss Terry said, "I shall never forgive America if it does not rave over Mr. Barrie's 'Peter Pan.' To me it is simply the daintiest, tenderest, funniest and most impossible stage nightmare that was ever written. It makes you laugh and it makes you cry, and I don't know which I enjoyed doing most. From what I know of Miss Adams's work I am sure that she will be ideal in the part."

The frightful hot wave which lasted for over ten days in mid-July, left New York for the first time in twenty years with only one legitimate theater open. This was "Fantana," Shubert's production at the Lyric, which is now running rapidly towards its three hundredth performance. There is one rather curious feature about this musical comedy. Today, of course, it is a jolly, bright and bristling production with two stars, Jeffer-



PHOTOGRAPH BY STEIN, MILWAUKEE

Sam Bernard

son de Angelis and Miss Katie Barry, who are unflagging in their efforts to make fun. But for all that, like "Floradora," its success was originally made by a song—a song which in this instance was interpolated after the first New York performance. If it had been there originally, the notices of "Fantana" would have been far more enthusiastic, but on the first night the fine and ludicrous work of Mr. De Angelis was ruined by a stupid little song which the librettist had given him to sing just at the end of the play. No one realized its worthlessness more fully than Mr. De Angelis did. Bright and early the next morning he was scouring the music shops in search of a new song. His search proving fruitless, he had almost given up hope, when a friend brought him a manuscript copy of a song called "Tammany." In New York they say that no song has ever really made a hit until it is played by all the orchestras on the Coney Island boats. According to this standard, "Tammany's" success has been phenomenal, for there isn't an orchestra,



PHOTOGRAPH BY BURR MCINTOSH, NEW YORK

Miss Ethel Barrymore

harmonium, pianola, or hand-organ on active service this season which has not "Tammany" as the most prominent feature of its répertoire. The fact that for a few nights "Fantana" was left alone in its glory, was due to the generosity of Mr. Charles Frohman, who, hearing in London of the frightful heat in New York, cabled his representatives to close the Herald Square Theater and give the members of the "Rollicking Girl" company, including Miss Hattie Williams and Sam Bernard, a holiday on full salary until a cool wave came along. After a five days' rest the performance was resumed, and now once again the "Rollicking Girl" and "Fantana" are running neck and neck for midsummer honors.

At the Garden Theater, Manager Savage and his forces are already hard at work preparing for the production of George Ade's new play, "The Bad Samaritan." Miss Ann Sutherland, who was originally engaged to support Raymond Hitchcock in the new comedy which is now being written for him, has



PHOTOGRAPH BY BURR MCINTOSH, NEW YORK

Miss Nella Bergen



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Scene from Nat Goodwin's new play, "The Beauty and the Barge"

been transferred to Mr. Ade's play and will create one of the leading parts in "The Bad Samaritan."

Up in the Thousand Islands Miss May Irwin, at her summer home, is rehearsing on a common-sense plan. All the members of the "Mrs. Black is Back" company are there as her guests, and the rehearsals are held every evening after the visitors have swum themselves almost to death and caught enough fish to stock a Metropolitan aquarium. Miss Irwin is one of those actresses who strongly advocate the idea that once in every four or five years a star should vanish from the theatrical firmament for at least a season. "I don't care how great an actor or actress may be," remarked Miss Irwin while discussing this topic, "sooner or later the public is going to tire. Three years ago, when ill health obliged me to retire for a season, I said

to myself, 'It is all up with little May.' I really had serious intentions of retiring and allowing myself to grow fat. But finally, when the old longing came back to me, I give you my word I was frightened to death. The first night I played *Mrs. Black* in New York was the most awful ordeal to me that I have ever gone through. I knew the play was all right, but I honestly thought that they had forgotten all about me. The result knocked all my fears sky-high. As a matter of fact, my engagement at the Bijou last season was by many thousands of dollars the most successful that I had ever played in New York, and it was the same in all the other cities where I went. I came back to work with just as much enthusiasm as the dear old public brought out to receive me with. We had both profited by our holiday, and liked each other in consequence."